

THE AWARD-WINNING INDEPENDENT: EDITOR OF THE YEAR, CORRESPONDENT OF THE YEAR



THE INDEPENDENT

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Safari Britons taken hostage

FIVE BRITONS were last night believed to be among 13 Western tourists taken hostage by armed rebels while on a mountain gorilla safari in Uganda.

Three people - including a tourist - were killed after 150 rebels, believed to be Rwandan Hutus, stormed three remote campsites on Sunday night, in an apparently co-ordinated attack in Uganda's impenetrable Forest National Park. None of the three was British. It is believed up to 30 Westerners were initially taken hostage but that 17 of them, including the French deputy ambassador to Kampala, Anne Peltier, escaped.

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE AND KIM SENGUPTA

Last August four tourists were seized by Hutus, who later released one of them. The other three, including a Briton, have not been heard of since. The incident was one in a recent spate of high-profile kidnaps involving Britons in places as diverse as Chechnya, Yemen and Nigeria.

Last night, the British High Commissioner in Uganda, Michael Cook, said he still had few details about the raids. "We have been told there was an attack on the camp. A num-

ber of people were abducted - 13, some of whom we believe are British nationals," he said. "We are working closely with Ugandan authorities to find out more."

A spokesman for the American embassy in Kampala, Virgil Bordean, said: "We know there are some US citizens but we do not know how many."

A source close to the Uganda Wildlife Authority said that ethnic Hutu rebels from neighbouring Rwanda attacked two camps on the edge of the park. He said a game warden who was with the tourists was missing and feared dead.

The Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, which lies close to the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo, is home to about 300 mountain gorillas and is one of only two areas where they can still be found.

Last August, six tourists who had crossed from Uganda into Congo in the midst of that country's civil war in order to track the gorillas were also attacked and kidnapped by Rwandan Hutu rebels.

Three of that group, who were in another gorilla habitat near the Virunga volcanoes, are still missing, although Ugandan wildlife authorities said last

month that they believed they were still alive.

The attacks took place at the campsites, in the south-west of Uganda, which are run by at least two different operators.

Mike Jones, managing director of tour operators Abercrombie and Kent, which owns one of the sites, said: "We had 11 clients of various nationalities staying at the Gorilla Forest camp. There were other Westerners staying at other camps. We think that up to 150 rebels stormed the camps. At our camp, a Kenyan guide and two of his clients were taken. Our other eight clients have

now been moved to Kampala."

An employee of the African Pearl Safari tour company, which owns another site, said the gunmen, camouflaged and carrying automatic rifles, attacked its camp and set it ablaze, forcing staff and guests to flee into the dense brush.

"The information we have is that seven have escaped from captivity, and we may get more as time goes by," said the employee, who would not reveal his name. "Our people in the camp are scared."

Unconfirmed reports said the three killed included at least one tourist. It is thought

the other two were Ugandans and that one may have been an employee of the state-owned Uganda Wildlife Authority.

The attacks come against the backdrop of continuing ethnic violence in central Africa. The hostage-takers were almost certainly Hutus - the remnants of those responsible for the genocide of 800,000 Rwandan Tutsis in 1994.

The Foreign Office said last night that it could only confirm that "a number" of Britons had been kidnapped. It is believed the other Westerners are Americans and French. Last night, no demands had been made by the kidnappers.

Since then, they have been based in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo. There has been continued fighting between the Hutus and the Uganda People's Defence Force along the forested border, with the rebels regularly crossing the border to ambush vehicles and take hostages.

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Safari danger, page 3



Vian Sharif, the Cambridge cox, with her team-mates for the Boat Race against Oxford on 3 April. Ms Sharif, 19, is 5ft tall and weighs 7st 6lb. Her smallest oarsman is 6ft 3in. Cambridge have won for the past six years and are favourites to make it seven. Full report, Sport, page 25

Ministers lukewarm on free care for elderly

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

DOWNING STREET and the Treasury dug in their heels yesterday against accepting a Royal Commission report recommending that long-term care for the elderly should be provided free to all, at a cost to the nation of £6bn.

The Royal Commission's recommendation - free "personal care" for all, with means-tested payment for living costs such as food and accommodation - would be popular but the Prime Minister's policy unit and the Treasury believe it would mean raising too much money in taxation to pay for the long-term care of the better off.

Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health, announced that there would be a period of consultation on the report, but it is unlikely that it will be accepted fully by the Government. MPs said last night they expected early action by lifting or abolishing the £16,000 limit on assets, which has forced some home owners to sell their houses to qualify for free care.

The sense of injustice felt by families forced to sell parents' homes, which is still being enforced by social services departments, led to promises of action by Tony Blair at the general election.

The limit on assets could be raised to about £20,000 - just below the average price of a three-bed semi - or scrapped, at an annual cost of up to £220m, but long-term solutions are more difficult. Mr Dobson told MPs: "This is a complex issue and there are no easy solutions. We have to get this right."

The minority report called for people to be encouraged to take out private insurance schemes to contribute to long-term care, the solution offered by the Tories. Labour MPs said Mr Dobson would be "lynched" if he proposed private insurance. They expect the Government to adopt a combination of measures, including lifting the means-testing threshold on assets and possibly a contributory insurance scheme.

The Labour MP Malcolm Wicks, an expert on social policy, said: "It is a big problem and I urge the Government to come up with a big solution."

End to 'injustice' page 6

'Looted Nazi art' in National Gallery

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

THE NATIONAL Gallery is to study the histories of more than 100 of its paintings amid fears that they could have been looted by the Nazis. The suspect works include paintings by Picasso, Renoir, Redon, Degas, Van Dyck and Caravaggio.

The National Gallery will be the first gallery or museum in the world to go through its collection to root out paintings with Nazi links. However its director, Neil MacGregor, said yesterday that even if any of the

paintings were found to have been looted by the Nazis, they could not be returned to their rightful owners. He said: "In law we can't transfer title. So we can't give a painting back to an individual but the individual might want compensation."

The decision to investigate any painting whose provenance is unclear is the first step by British galleries to determine

whether any works might have been looted from Jewish families. Other galleries, including the Tate, the British Museum and leading regional galleries are drawing up plans to sift through their collections.

Mr MacGregor said yesterday he thought it unlikely that many, if any, of the paintings would turn out to have been in Nazi hands. But after the "Nazi Gold" revelations of money looted from Jewish families, it was felt necessary to remove

any doubt. He added: "Of the 2,400 paintings in the National Gallery, 470 have been acquired since 1933 and there are 120 where we can't be certain about their provenance."

"We are doing this so anyone who might have a claim can see what is in the National Gallery. But we should keep a sense of proportion; my hunch is that only very few works will turn out to be open to dispute."

On the 120-strong list are such works as *Woman Drying*

Herself by Degas; *Ophelia Among the Flowers* by Redon and Picasso's *Fruit, Dish, Bottles and Vases*.

The change in attitude to the Nazi period over the past couple of years is illustrated by the example of Bosschaert's *Flowers in a Vase*, acquired by the National Gallery five years ago.

Its annual report from the time merely said that the picture had been bought in Switzerland "shortly after the Second World War".

Ophelia Among the Flowers: Loot fears

Redon's *Ophelia Among the Flowers*: Loot fears

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THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

Australia	1.50 A\$	Ireland	1.20 50c
Austria	40.00 Sch	Italy	5.000 L
Belgium	90.00 BEF	Luxembourg	60.00 L
Canada	3.50 C\$	Malta	0.850
Cyprus	1.20 C	Morocco	5.500 Dinar
Czech Republic	200 CZK	Norway	200.00 N
Denmark	15.00 DK	Portugal	350.00 M
Finland	10.00 FM	Singapore	388.55
France	10.00 FF	Spain	325 Pts
Germany	4.50 DM	Sweden	23.00 Skr
Greece	1.00 Dr	Switzerland	5.000 Fr
Hong Kong	120 HK\$	UK	1.250 £
Iceland	700 Dr	USA	\$3.50

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WITH THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

You're not singing any more: how Sir John Hall's sporting empire took a dive

IN THE BUSINESS REVIEW, FREE WITH THE INDEPENDENT EVERY WEDNESDAY

■ PLUS DON'T YOU JUST LOVE BEING IN CONTROL? HOW BRITISH GAS TURNED INTO CENTRICA

THE BEST WRITING IS IN THE INDEPENDENT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH MCRAE, IAN JACK, ROBERT FISK, TERENCE BLACKER, SUSANNAH FRANKEL, BRIAN VINE, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, DEBORAH ORR, THOMAS SUTCLIFFE, MILES KINGSON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITTEMITH SMITH

Sarwar bribe 'implausible' says minister

A CABINET minister went into the witness box at the High Court in Edinburgh yesterday to describe how he met Mohammed Sarwar in Downing Street to hear the newly elected Labour MP's response to a bribery allegation.

Nick Brown, who was government chief whip at the time in May 1997, said he had found a *News of the World* story that Mr Sarwar paid an election rival £5,000 to ease off his campaign "implausible". However, Mr Sarwar's explanation was "too convoluted" for Mr Brown to understand in an afternoon and of such seriousness he handed on investigations to Labour's National Executive and the legal authorities.

The trial of the businessman, who became Britain's first Muslim MP when he held Glasgow Govan for Labour at the general election, is in its sixth week. Mr Sarwar denies charges of electoral fraud and attempting to pervert the course of justice. He

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

is accused of having names falsely added to the electoral role, bribing an "independent Labour" candidate, Badar Islam, to pin the blame for the voting irregularities on another fringe candidate and of pretending the £5,000 was a loan.

Mr Brown, now the Minister of Agriculture, told the court he arranged to meet Mr Sarwar at the chief whip's office at 12 Downing Street on 18 May 1997 - the day the story appeared and a little over two weeks after Labour's election triumph. Mr Sarwar was keen to discuss the allegations, he said.

"I wasn't summoning him; we both wanted to discuss them as a matter of urgency."

Mr Brown said he found the allegation that Mr Islam had been paid a "hung" implausible. "It was too late in the campaign to affect the outcome."

The case continues.



Lord Owen launching New Europe yesterday in London

Owen and Healey stand against euro

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

TONY BLAIR'S plans to win public support for British membership of the single currency were undermined yesterday by the launch of a new group of pro-Europeans who oppose the euro.

The New Europe research and campaign group, headed by Lord Owen, the former SDP leader, argues that Britain can still enjoy influence in the European Union without ditching the pound. Allies of Mr Blair say he is convinced that Britain will not have "real clout" unless it takes part in monetary union.

In a speech in Milan today, Mr Blair will say that the euro alone will not bring prosperity, but that it could do so if combined with economic reform. At a meeting of EU socialist par-

ties, the Prime Minister will reject German demands for higher taxes and more regulation. He will urge Europe to emulate the United States, saying it has created "real jobs" in tech industries and not just so-called "McJobs" in ham burger bars.

Under the slogan "common sense on the single currency", Lord Owen's organisation will seek to influence public opinion so that Mr Blair is deterred from calling a referendum on the euro.

"We are quite unashamedly and unwaveringly supporters of the European Union," Lord Owen said. "I am a committed member of the EU without being a member of euroland."

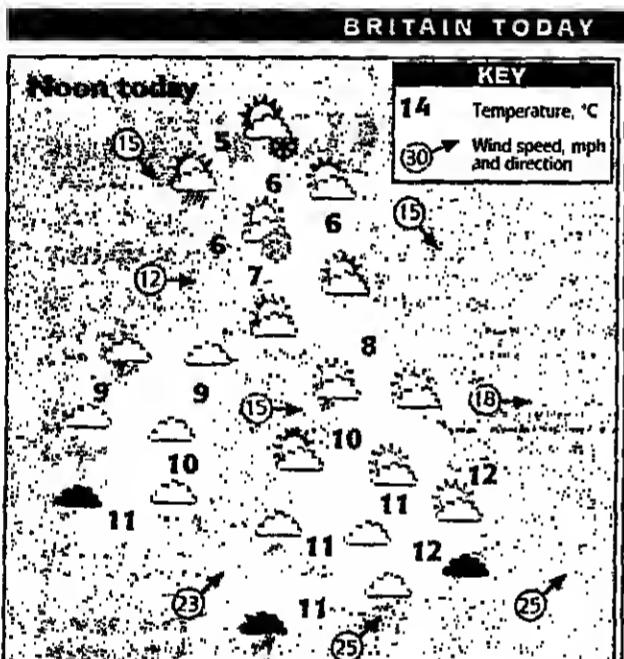
He admitted that it was in Britain's economic interest for the euro to succeed, but said the Government should not be pressured into joining or do so because it was "fashionable". His group would research some of the important unaddressed issues - such as the impact of the euro on mortgages, pensions and the harmonisation of state benefits.

The former Labour foreign secretary said his body had "deliberately stunned" support from Eurosceptics, but if it would work closely with the business for Sterling group, which also opposes the euro. He would share a platform with sceptics if Labour called a referendum.

The group's launch docu-

ment said: "We do not say 'never' but for now we are in the enviable position of being able to wait and watch others take part in an experiment which

Hamish McRae, Review, page 4



LIGHTING UP

HIGH TIDES
Belfast 5.59pm to 7.12am
Birmingham 9.45pm to 6.53am
Bristol 5.50pm to 6.54am
Glasgow 5.20pm to 6.43am
London 5.46pm to 6.45am
Manchester 5.46pm to 6.56am
Newcastle 5.41pm to 6.55am

EXTREMES
Warmest: Guernsey 13C (55F)
Coldest (day): L Glencoe 3C (37F)
Wettest: Strathearn, Perthshire 1.5 ins
Sunniest: Hastings, Sussex 8.1 hrs
For 24hrs to 6pm Sunday

Sea hrs mm °C °F

Aberdeen 3.8 0.5 7 45
Anglesey 0 2.0 9 57
Belfast 1.6 3.6 8 46
Birmingham 2.9 2.0 10 50
Bournemouth 4.1 0.5 11 57
Cardiff 3.3 1.3 12 54
Buxton 3.3 0.9 8 46
Cardiff 2.4 1.0 12 54
Clacton 7.7 0.5 9 48
Dartmouth 2.4 0.5 12 54
Edinburgh 2.8 14.2 7 45
Exmouth 2.4 0.3 11 52
Fife 2.4 0.5 11 52
Fishguard 0.4 1.8 10 50
Folkestone 7.9 1.1 11 52
Glasgow 2.4 0.5 11 52
Hastings 8.1 0.9 11 52
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Isle-of-man 0.8 1.0 10 50
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Manchester 2.1 0.5 10 50
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Morecambe 0 2.8 9 48
Newquay 1.3 1.8 10 50
Nottingham 5.1 0.5 12 54
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Ross-on-wye 3.1 0.3 11 52
Salcombe 4.2 1.0 11 52
Shrewsbury 1.3 1.0 12 52
Southend 6.5 0.7 7 45
Southport 4.8 0.5 11 52
Stornoway 2.9 0.6 6 43
Torbay 4.7 0.5 11 52
Tenby 0.7 3.6 10 50
Torquay 3.3 0.2 12 54
Weymouth 3.8 0.3 11 52

Height measured in metres

AIR QUALITY
Today's readings

NO₂ Moderate Good
SO₂ Good Good
Wales Good Good
C England Good Good
N Scotland Good Good
N Ireland Good Good

SUN & MOON

SUN rises: 06 47 Sun sets: 17 40 Moon sets: 06 33 Full moon: March 2nd

WEATHERLINE

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SPRING collection



Sensual, glamorous, hip. It's how some high fashion followers would describe the delights of wearing a mink coat. Every year, tens of thousands of mink are killed on fur farms throughout the UK. In the wild, mink establish territories of over a kilometre, where they climb, dive and swim. On farms, they are confined in rows of tiny cages. In such restricted conditions mink show abnormal behaviour. There are instances of fur-biting and even self-mutilation. We at the RSPCA believe that this is cruel. Nevertheless, there are still those who would kill for a real mink coat. The preferred method of slaughter on most farms is to gas the mink. On March 5th, the MP Maria Eagle's Bill to ban fur farming in the UK will be debated in the Commons. A new opinion poll revealed that 74% of the British public support a ban on fur farming. If you're part of this majority, please write to your MP urging them to attend the House on March 5th and to vote in favour of the Bill. And let's make the needless suffering of animals for fur a trend that will never be fashionable again.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL THE RSPCA ON 01403 223 284.

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Racism: Home Secretary launches inquiry into Lawrence leaks and tells chief constables to end prejudice, or else

Straw warns police over race reforms

CHIEF CONSTABLES who fail to introduce race relations reforms will risk having their forces run by government inspectors, the Home Secretary warned yesterday.

The threat by Jack Straw followed the publication of a critical report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, which found many police chiefs were refusing to make race a priority. The study, of all 43 forces in England and Wales, found 16 - nearly 40 per cent - did not have a community and race relations strategy in place and criticised many chief officers for failing to take a lead.

Mr Straw said that ultimately he could use the "power of intervention", which would involve sending in hit squads of inspectors to run part, or all, of any force that refused to make any improvements.

"I hope it will not come to that, but it does tend to concentrate the mind," he added.

Ministers are becoming increasingly frustrated that a significant number of chief constables appear to be paying lip service to reforms in race relations, rather than bringing about meaningful change.

Mr Straw said he was "disappointed" at the report's finding that many police chiefs had failed to respond to calls for an urgent rethink on race relations issued in an HMIC report *Winning the Race* published in 1997. Yesterday's study examined 15 forces to discover what progress was being made.

Inspectors said the failure to introduce reform "signifies... that community and race relations issues remain peripheral... for many forces."

As revealed in *The Independent* on Saturday, the HMIC report also praises the Metropolitan Police - which last week was condemned for "perni-

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent



Newing: 'A great deal of work yet to be done'

cions and institutionalised' racism in Sir William Macpherson's report on the Lawrence case - for its strong leadership on race. Also praised were South Wales, West Yorkshire, Bedfordshire, and the Trinity Road division in Bristol.

Inspectors found a minority

FORCES OF CHANGE

THE FIVE forces with the worst record were Cumbria, which was implementing only seven of HMIC's 27 reforms, North Yorkshire (10), Cambridge, City of London (both 11), Surrey and Avon and Somerset (both 14).

The five with the best record were Leicestershire (26), Greater Manchester, Lancashire (both 25), Suffolk (24), Sussex, and West Yorkshire (both 24).

of officers were still using racist language and behaviour towards colleagues and that senior officers were often failing to treat complaints by black and Asian officers seriously. They found "in isolated incidents, [managers] 'turning' the complaint against them."

"It stretches credibility to accept that the use of such language or behaviour does not surface in their dealings with the public," said the report.

It said that retaining ethnic minority officers was a "cause for concern" and criticised the fact that more than a quarter of the forces did not monitor whether ethnic minority staff had left the service.

Promotion of ethnic minority officers was identified as a continuing problem, with no black or Asian graduates being chosen for a national acceleration scheme for junior ranks in the past three years.

The inspector found that officers who express racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour are currently not given negative marks during promotion exams. The police examination board have promised to change this practice.

A third study will be carried out to monitor police performance on the race issue.

John Newing, president of the Association of Chief Police Officers and Chief Constable of Derbyshire, said: "We are pleased to see that HMIC has recognised the good work going on... there is, however, a great deal of work yet to be done to ensure that this success is repeated around the country."

Norman Bettison, the Chief Constable of Merseyside, announced yesterday that he had written to all his force's 6,600 staff and launched a task force to carry out a "root and branch" policy review of race relations.



Jack Straw in Tewkesbury yesterday where he warned police chiefs to eliminate racism Peter MacDiarmid

Independent inquiry into leaking of Lawrence report

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

JACK STRAW appointed an independent investigator yesterday to carry out an inquiry into the leaking of the Stephen Lawrence report.

The Home Secretary said the leak was "a serious matter" that he "thoroughly deplored".

He promised the investigation would be completed as quickly as possible.

The leak - and subsequent injunction obtained by Mr Straw - caused anger ahead of the publication of the report. Police officials claimed it had been leaked to damage Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. Downing Street has already expressed doubt that any culprit

whether the investigator will have the power to question those with access to the report outside the government, and what discussions occurred between ministers before the injunction to stop publication.

Sir Norman said the leak was part of a litany of blunders surrounding the report that he blamed on Mr Straw, culminating in the Home Secretary's decision to leave his junior minister Paul Boateng to answer questions from MPs on Friday while he went to the south of France for a weekend break.

Sir Norman said it was the Conservatives who called for a statement on Friday and they were still demanding to

know who was responsible for the original leak.

Ministers will be questioned about whether they were responsible for leaking the 333-page report. But Mr Boateng has told friends that officials can prove he was not responsible.

Copies of the report were kept under lock and key at the Home Office before it was published. Mr Boateng was logged in and out by a Home Office civil servant as having read the report on Thursday, 18 February, but the report of the leak said that it was read the day before.

In September last year a jury at an inquest returned an "unlawful killing" verdict. After the inquest the case was reopened.

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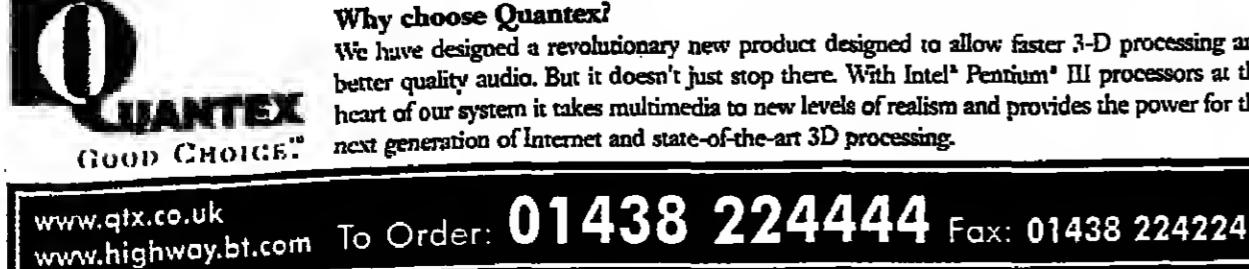
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Welfare of elderly: Royal Commission calls for end to 'injustice' of forcing better-off pensioners to sell their homes

'Scandal' of paying for care in old age

THE INJUSTICE faced by old people who find themselves impoverished at the end of their lives by having to pay thousands of pounds for their care while others pay nothing is a scandal that must be ended, the Royal Commission on Long Term Care said yesterday.

While patients with cancer get free NHS care in hospital, others with Alzheimer's disease, looked after in nursing homes, have to pay an average of £337 a week. This inequality must be removed by making all personal and nursing care free, whether provided in hospital or elsewhere, the commission says.

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

The 12-member commission, established in December 1997 by Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, in fulfilment of a manifesto commitment, says the question of how the costs of care in old age are to be met cannot be ducked. Sir Stewart Sutherland, the chairman, said: "We have found the current system to be confusing and complex, creating real fear among those approaching old age. This is a scandal and it must be changed."

However, the cost of its pro-

posal, estimated at £1.1bn immediately, rising to more than £5bn by the middle of the next century, has been privately described by ministers as "unaffordable".

The Prime Minister's policy unit and the Treasury believe it would mean raising too much money in taxation to pay for care of the better off. But ministers have hinted that they may be prepared to raise the threshold for savings, currently £16,000, above which old people have to pay for their care. Lifting the threshold to £60,000, an alternative measure recommended by the commission if

the Government backs at making nursing care free, would cost £175m.

Mr Dobson said he would look carefully at the commission's proposals but made no commitment. He told MPs: "This is a complex issue and there are no easy solutions. We have to get this right."

The commission was split over the issue of free nursing care with two members producing a "dissenting" note. David Lipsey, public policy editor of *The Economist*, and Joel Joffe, chairman of Oxfam, argued that it would involve the transfer of huge resources to

the property-owning middle-classes that ought to be concentrated on the most needy. Mr Lipsey said yesterday: "The majority's proposals would mean higher tax bills and not a single penny of that would go to better care for elderly people. It would all be swallowed up in a new subsidy to better-off people and their heirs."

Sir Stewart countered that the commission's proposals would add only 0.2 per cent to the 2.2 per cent spent from taxation on long-term care. This would rise to 0.4 per cent in the long term. "Our proposals will end unfairness," he said.

The agony aunt Claire Rayner, a member of the commis-

sion, said: "There is enormous anger among those over 70 who have paid all their lives for what they regard as National Insurance and who find when it comes to the crunch that the state is not there to protect their care. It cannot be fair and no government in its right mind is going to alienate so large a proportion of the population and their heirs."

The minority argued that requiring the state to protect people's inheritance imposed an impossible burden and that there was an urgent need to provide more help to enable people to remain in their own homes.

One in three women and one in five men over 65 will need residential care at some time in their lives, the report says. A married couple would need to save £26,000 to meet the cost of a residential home for each of them for three years.

There are 480,000 old people cared for in homes, 157,000 of them in nursing homes, of whom 42,500 are paying for themselves. An estimated 40,000 people a year have to sell their homes to pay for their care.

Total spending on the care of the elderly, currently £1.1bn, is estimated to rise to between £2.8bn and £7.5bn by 2051.

NEW IDEAS FOR OLD

Main recommendations of the Royal Commission on Long Term Care are as follows:

The costs of long-term care to be split between the "hotel" element and personal care. Personal care to be available free after assessment according to need and hotel costs to be means tested.

A National Care Commission should be established to monitor trends and oversee standards in old people's homes.

The value of an elderly person's home to be disregarded under the means test for up to three months after admission to residential care.

Consideration to be given as to whether every new resident may be able to return home. More care to be given to people in their own homes and more services to be offered to carers.

National Health Service and social services budgets to be pooled together with budgets for housing aids and adaptations.

'My money will all be taken. It's heart-breaking'

ELLEN WHITE always thought she would be able to leave her home to her children when she died. Instead, she now faces having to sell the bungalow where she lived for more than 20 years to pay the costs of staying in a care home.

Last year, Mrs White, a widow, broke her hip. She spent time in hospital and it was then decided her own home was no longer suitable. Both the kitchen and the bathroom were too small to get into with the walking frame she now requires. She was transferred to a convalescent home and from there to the Montrose care home in Watford, Hertfordshire, on 4 December. Her husband is now to be sold.

"I feel pretty awful about it, very distressed when I think about it. It's heart-breaking," she said. She had already made a will leaving the property to benefit her son, Michael, and daughter, Avril, her six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

"Of course, now I've got to make a new will. Will there be anything left to leave? They go on taking the money for my keep until the money is used up. I don't think there will be any-

thing left." She considers the current system a "dreadful sin". Those people who have not looked after their money, who smoked and drank and everything else, the Government will keep them. But those people who haven't smoked or drunk, who've saved up with our children in mind, then you're penalised in the end."

She had watched this happen to other people in the past. "I thought I'd never let them do that to me," she said. "But you get caught."

STAN SHEINWALD has lost everything of the life he once enjoyed as he faces the consequences of his wife having developed multiple sclerosis.

He spent seven years looking after Mary, giving up his own business as an insurance broker to do so.

After a spell in hospital last year, the social workers suggested that Mrs Sheinwald, now 54, should go into care. "They said, 'It's about time you let go. Your health is suffering.' I said fine." Mr Sheinwald, 61, said. But in his bewilderment at the time, he failed to appre-



Ellen White at the care home she moved to after breaking her hip. She considers the current system a 'dreadful sin'

David Rose

ciate what this would mean for both of them. Without his wife's social security payments, his own income was left at just £61 a week, making it impossible for him to pay the mortgage on their four-bedroom home. He

sold the house and most of the profit went to clear debts incurred during the time he had not worked. He bought a small two-bedroom flat to be able to live near his wife in her residential home in Harrow, north-

west London. But now the social security department has made a claim on his flat, saying half belonged to Mrs Sheinwald and should be used to pay her care fees. "I could be homeless," Mr Sheinwald said yes-

terday. "I've lost my business, my house that I worked very hard for and my wife. I've paid a very high price."

"If someone gives up their life to look after someone and just manage to survive, they shouldn't be abandoned."

The Royal Commission estimates it would cost £1bn a year to pay for this kind of care. Carers save the Government £34m a year. Where is that money going?"

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IN BRIEF

Doctor denies five murder charges

A FAMILY doctor accused of murdering 15 women patients pleaded not guilty yesterday to five of the charges at Manchester Crown Court. Dr Harold Shipman, 53, from Hyde, Greater Manchester, has already pleaded not guilty to four other charges of murdering patients. His trial is expected to begin on October 4 and to last between two and three months. The court has not been set.

Pupil spikes teacher's cup of tea

A 15-YEAR-OLD girl has been suspended after spiking a science teacher's drink with a toxic chemical. The pupil put copper sulphate in Susan Ascroft's cup of tea as she began a class at Irlam and Cadishead Community High School in Greater Manchester.

Dog eats drugs evidence

A STRAY dog at a cannabis plant police were keeping for evidence. An officer put the dog in a kennel at Bath police station, not knowing the drug unit had stored the plants there. The mongrel, who was discovered behaving in a peculiar manner, was unharmed by his unusual meal.

Sweet tin bomb on window sill

ARMY EXPLOSIVES experts defused a pipe bomb left by loyalist paramilitaries yesterday at the home of a Catholic family near Coalisland, Co Tyrone. They carried out a controlled explosion on the device, which was inside a sweet tin left on the window sill of the house.

Snail stops £12.5m golf course

A SNAIL could force plans for a £12.5m golf course to be abandoned. The very rare Verdugo Augustus, 2mm long, has been found on the site in Co Clare, Ireland.

Disgraced financier jailed for dole fraud

THE FORMER financier Peter Clowes was jailed yesterday for four months after he was convicted of making false claims for jobseeker's allowance.

Clowes, 56, sentenced to 10 years after the collapse of the investment company Barlow Clowes in 1992, had denied claiming £1,800 in benefits when he was working over a four-month period from December 1996. The jury at Mold Crown Court in north Wales took three hours to find Clowes, a computer programmer from Stockport, Greater Manchester, guilty on all three counts.

Judge John Rogers QC said the offence was aggravated by the fact that Clowes had been out of prison for just 10 months when he made the false claims. The fraud was "sophisticated" and "deliberate", he said. If there had not been a change in the law, Clowes could have been ordered to serve some of the remainder of his previous sentence.

Nigel Fieldhouse, for the defence, asked the judge to consider a sentence that would not "crush" his client.

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All praise Stockport, home to the famous brick viaduct

PRAYERS STOP dead at 2.35pm in Parliament, religious devotion being subject to the same intrinsically timetable as all other parliamentary business. Worldly pieties often continue for a little longer, though. Yesterday, for example, Chris Smith's first question was a shameless underarm bow from a Labour backbencher, Karen Buck, fearlessly demanding to know what progress the Department for Culture, Media and Sport was making towards increasing the representation of women and people from ethnic minorities. Just as fearlessly Mr Smith replied that they were making capital progress, at which

point the congregation murmured the time-honoured response, "though obviously a great deal remains to be achieved in this area".

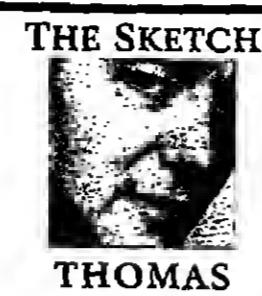
Then, at 2.35pm, real politics started, with Crispin Blunt asking a question about the unconscionable deprivation of Reigate when it came to lottery fund handouts.

Tony Banks conceded that Mr

Blunt's constituency was lagging a little behind the national average. Perhaps other lottery projects just had more to recommend them, he suggested, implacably. Perhaps it's all a conspiracy, suggested Dennis Skinner; rising to remind the House that Bolsover and Chesterfield,

both constituencies with avowedly socialist MPs, had done conspicuously badly for lottery grants under the Conservative government. "If the boot has been put on the other foot a little then no bad thing!" Injustice for all was Mr Skinner's cry, and his relish at this reversal of fortunes earned him a tribute from Mr Banks for his zeal in attack.

This being the session for questions about tourism there will always be MPs who try to boost their own local attractions, however hopeless the enterprise seems. Ann Coffey, for example, drew the attention of the House to the glories of Stockport, a constituency that in



THE SKETCH
THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

includes "the largest brick-built railway viaduct in the world". Some of Ms Coffey's colleagues looked sceptical at the prospects of

building a local tourist industry on such a foundation, but I thought I discerned some expressions of interest in the public gallery. Do you mean to say we could be looking at masonry in Stockport, people were to themselves, instead of trying to fight sleep here?

But then Mr Banks came on again for a second set and everyone perked up. The cheeky compere for Westminster's Cockney Kneel-Down Experience (all the whisks you can eat and comic banter thrown in free) is always a crowd pleaser and he didn't let us down yesterday.

Simon Hughes acted as his first straight man, picking off him and the

Prime Minister for "kicking the England manager when he was down". Mr Banks noted drily that this tackle was so late that all the players had left the field. Then he defended himself; it wasn't easy for ministers, he pointed out, since commenting on such matters was

in response to a question from Claire Ward, the youngest member in the House. He had enjoyed visiting her Watford constituency recently, he said, particularly since he had suffered an election defeat there in the 1979 election.

He then pointed out that she had been only seven at the time, an age that made her "too young to vote and too old to kiss". Several MPs quivered visibly at the delicious fission this turn of phrase provoked. Most junior ministers would have satisfied themselves with the cliché, but Mr Banks went one step further.

His best line came later, though.

Lords should be a Senate, say Tories

THE CONSERVATIVE Party is ready to support radical plans to replace the House of Lords with a second chamber based on an elected US-style Senate.

In an attempt to outflank the Government, the Conservatives are close to backing the idea of a 360-member chamber that would be elected on 15-year terms. The ambitious plans emerged yesterday as the Royal Commission on the Reform of the House of Lords announced after its first meeting that it would be holding future meetings in public.

To give "ordinary people" a say in the shape of the second chamber the Commission will stage its hearings across the country in the form of a consultation roadshow.

However, many leading Tories believe that they can embarrass Tony Blair over his intention to create a "transitional" Lords made up of members or "cronies" appointed by the Government.

The Tory proposal, which has been drawn up by the party's alternative commission on House of Lords reform chaired by Lord Mackay of

CONSTITUTION

BY PAUL WAUGH AND SARAH SCHAEFER

Clashern, would introduce regional representatives who would serve to "glue" Britain together after devolution.

Although bishops and law lords would be retained, most members would be elected on 15-year terms. According to party sources, the idea of a wholly elected second chamber is gaining ground among MPs and peers who fear the Government is trying to weaken the chamber's powers by failing to set out stage two of the reform.

"There is a great deal of debate going on within the party at the moment. While most agree on the merits of a wholly elected second chamber, there are still many different views on how to get there," the source said.

The Tory commission is also considering giving the second chamber the power to initiate legislation and greater ability to scrutinise secondary legislation such as European directives. The body, set up by William Hague last year, is ex-

pected to report later this spring and give formal evidence to the Royal Commission in the summer.

The Commission, which is chaired by Lord Wakeham, a Conservative peer, announced yesterday that it would seek evidence from a wide range of experts, interested parties and the public. The House of Lords Bill currently before Parliament will abolish most hereditary peers and create a "transitional" chamber made up of 91 hereditaries and life peers.

The Government has yet to decide the shape of its "second stage" reforms and has agreed that the Commission should attempt to define the role, functions and composition of the Lords for the future.

The Commission, which has to report by 31 December, is made up of Gerald Kaufman MP, Lord Hurd, Baroness Dean of Thornton-le-Fylde, Lord Butler of Brockwell, the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Rev Richard Harries, Sir Michael Wheeler-Booth, Professor Anthony King, Bill Morris, Professor Dawn Oliver, Kenneth Munro and Ann Benyon.

The actor Richard Wilson ringing a bell outside Westminster Cathedral yesterday, part of a worldwide bell-ringing campaign to mark the day the treaty to ban landmines came into effect. More than 60 countries have ratified the treaty to ban anti-personnel mines Tom Craig

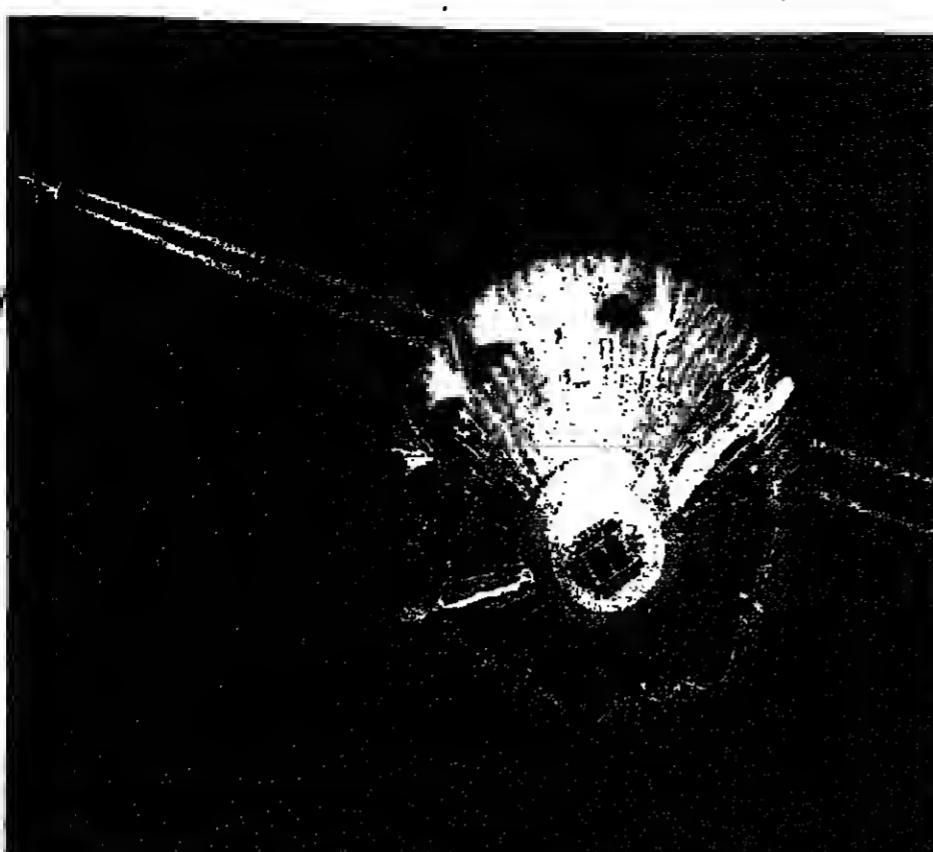


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Balloon takes short-cut in record chase



The Breitling balloon lifts off, having given its rival a big lead Andrew Buurman

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

IN AESOP'S fable, the tortoise won the race by plodding on steadily, while the hare rested, thinking he could sprint past his rival. But in a modern race in the skies, the outcome is far less certain.

Two teams are competing to be the first to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon. The Cable and Wireless entry, which lifted off 13 days ago, has a head start, but the Breitling Orbiter 3, which left yesterday, is smaller, lighter and faster.

And, crucially, the Breitling 3 has permission to fly over Chinese airspace, shortening its journey by some 4,000 miles. Cable and Wireless must go round, thanks to Richard Branson. His balloon drifted over China before Christmas, provoking an official complaint and all British-registered balloons have been banned from Chinese space while the Civil Aviation Authority investigates.

Bertrand Piccard, a Swiss pilot, and Brian Jones, from Wiltshire, set off from Chateau d'Oex, in Switzerland, at 0805 GMT yesterday and quickly

reached an average speed of 30mph. Their rivals, Andy Elson, 45, from Wells in Somerset, and Colin Prescott, 48, from Stockbridge in Hampshire, are drifting at 15mph over the Bay of Bengal, hoping to reach Japan in four days.

But Aaro Noble, the flight manager for Breitling, said his team hopes to reach Japan in eight days, narrowing the gap. "Their balloon is built for a slow trudge around the world and ours is built for a quick dash," he said. "We cannot catch up if

we use the same route. Over the Pacific we will be sharing the same winds so we will remain four days behind but it all depends what happens when we reach America.

Cable and Wireless may decide to go across America and Canada and by the time we get there the winds may have changed. Then it might be better to go south to California, which is shorter and we might catch up that way."

A spokeswoman for the Cable and Wireless team ad-

mitted having to go around China was frustrating but said they were too busy concentrating on their own flight to worry about Breitling.

At 191ft, the Cable and Wireless balloon is 40ft taller than the Breitling one, with a capacity of 1.1m cubic feet compared with 650,000. The fuel is kerosene, instead of the more usual propane, which can be stored in lighter unpressurised containers, allowing the craft to stay in the air longer.

As Mr Elson and Mr Prescott

cannot fly over China, they have allowed 25 days for their 20,000-mile journey. Mr Piccard, 41, whose grandfather Auguste set the first balloon altitude record in the 1930s, and Mr Jones are hoping to cover 16,000 miles in 16 days.

Richard Branson now says he will try to circumnavigate the globe from the southern hemisphere in the summer.

In Aesop's fable, slow and steady won the race. But in the latest challenge, Mr Branson is not even a contender.

ROUTES THE RIVALS ARE TAKING IN THEIR EPIC BATTLE OF THE SKIES

Wednesday 17 February: Cable & Wireless balloon takes off from America in southern Spain

Monday 1 March: The Breitling balloon is launched from Chateau d'Oex in Switzerland. Although 12 days behind its rival, the Breitling Orbiter 3 is smaller and faster, and has permission to fly over China

Saturday 27 February: Cable & Wireless breaks the around-the-world balloon endurance record of 233 hours

CHINA Possible route

The Cable & Wireless balloon (right), cruising at 15mph, is now heading south to avoid Chinese airspace



Robbie Williams faces £1m bill

THE POP STAR Robbie Williams could face a bill of more than £1m if he loses the High Court battle he resumed yesterday against his former manager.

Williams, who won three Brit awards a fortnight ago, is appealing against an earlier High Court ruling that he must pay £90,000 in commission to Nigel Martin-Smith, who was responsible for starting Take That, the phenomenally successful boy band that launched the singer's career. Costs, interest and VAT are expected to take the bill comfortably past the £1m mark.

The original action was rooted in Williams's acrimonious split from Take That. He left in July 1995, calling his erstwhile colleagues "selfish, arrogant and thick". As part of his contract, however, he was obliged to retain Mr Martin-Smith for a six-month notice period until February 1996.

When the singer refused to

pay commission after signing for a new record company, Mr Martin-Smith sued Williams for breach of contract.

Opening the appeal yesterday, Michael Silverleaf QC, described how Williams began to find the "very tight restrictions" imposed by Mr Martin-Smith on the band's lifestyle and activities "somewhat difficult".

"He began to go out to parties and enjoy himself," said Mr Silverleaf. "It became clear that Mr Williams ultimately wanted to leave the band... He just didn't feel he could stick with the constraints that were being imposed."

Since leaving Take That, Williams has shrugged off alcohol and drug problems and gone on to produce two highly successful solo albums - *Life Through a Lens* and *I've Been Expecting You*.

The hearing continues today.

DAVID AARONOVITCH



People fail to grasp that you can be racist without knowing it

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 3

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Where science never sleeps

£2bn float will crown the fall and rise of Canary Wharf

BY JOHN WILCOCK AND CLARE GARNER



Paul Reichmann: His dream has finally come true

ONE OF the newest and most instantly recognisable features of London's skyline - Canary Wharf and its fifty-storey tower - is to be floated on the stock market.

The Docklands development once hailed as the shining beacon of Thatcherite yuppie-dom formally rose from the ashes of recession yesterday with its owners announcing that it has been valued at more than £2bn.

The flotation brings the fortunes of Canary Wharf full circle. After being endorsed by Margaret Thatcher as the financial face of the future, the project proved a disaster for the Canadian real estate developer whose dream it was.

Now Paul Reichmann, who led a group of investors to buy back Canary Wharf from its bankers in 1995 for £800m, has recovered his optimism. He intends to place 25 per cent of the shares with institutional investors for an expected £500m and keep a stake worth £200m. The rest will stay with existing investors. The deal is expected to be done by Easter.

Under an agreement with the Government, the proceeds will go towards the Canary Wharf Group's final contribution of £70m to £90m to the Jubilee Line extension. The much-delayed Underground link to central London, which promises to be an efficient alternative to the erratic Docklands Light Rail, is due to open later this year.

The group also intends to cut its debt by £350m, leaving it owing a total of £500m. The remainder of the flotation proceeds will help to fund the 84-acre scheme's ambitious development programme.

"It's a huge watershed for us," George Iacobescu, the group's chief executive, said yesterday. "More than 60 per cent of the project is completed or under way."

Twenty-five thousand people work at Canary Wharf, a figure expected to treble in 10 years. A few years ago the complex resembled a ghost town, with few commercial outlets.

But despite the recent explosion of shops, restaurants and bars, many workers still feel cut off from the real world once they enter the futuristic, steel complex.

"It's like *The Truman Show*," said Anne Lynch, 36, sitting on a bench in the basement. "This is what we do every lunchtime. We always see the same people go past. It's really sad."

Indie Sangha, 25, an administrator at the Financial Services Authority, agreed.

"It's isolated," she said. "It's characterless. Everyone looks like drones."

Such disenchantment did not seem to be linked how much people earn. Bankers and builders expressed their dislike of the vibe yesterday.

"There's no atmosphere," said Matthew Tooth, 23, who recently joined a bank at the Wharf. "It's so business-oriented. Everyone walks with their head down."

To Joe Major, 40, who is in-

stalling heating and ventilation in the tower, Canary Wharf is "Americanism gone mad", particularly the comprehensive ban on smoking. "It's impersonal - I can't wait to get back to the City," he said. "The architecture's lovely, but you don't want to walk around with it," he said. "What we have now

is a camera every day."

Canary Wharf even has its own newspaper. Dennis Abbott, editor of *The Wharf*, said he never ceases to be amazed by his readers' attitude. "This place was built on the back of the yuppie boom and died with it," he said. "What we have now

is a reinvented yuppie, a compassionate yuppie."

Undeterred by a 1996 bombing attempt by the IRA, Canary Wharf's current investors include Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, CNA Financial Corporation, Franklin Mutual Series Fund and affiliates of Republic New York Corporation. Eleven buildings in the scheme are complete and a further seven under construction, including a 42-storey site that will be the headquarters of HSBC, owner of Midlands Bank.

Investment banks including Morgan Stanley Dean Witter and Credit Suisse First Boston are already installed, and the central tower - Britain's highest building - is home to nine national newspapers. Citigroup is about to

complete one tower and is due to announce later this week that it is to build a second, bigger one next door, to house its investment banking arm Salomon Smith Barney, now in Victoria, central London.

During the recession of the early Nineties Canary Wharf was looked upon as an Eighties white elephant. The only way to attract tenants was with low charges and lengthy rent-free periods.

But Mr Iacobescu said yesterday that such incentives were finished. Rental income from Canary Wharf had doubled since 1995, from "the mid-teens pounds per square foot to the mid thirties".

The plans to double the building space to 10 million square feet in five to seven years are expected in a pros-

pectus for potential investors to be published in 10 days.

Canary Wharf's long-term viability depends on its ability to attract financial institutions. There were suggestions that staying out of the euro could affect London as a prime financial centre, losing vital business to Frankfurt. That is not the view of Mr Iacobescu.

"London will remain Europe's financial centre," he said.

For those who may consider the complex soulless, help is at hand. Rev Gordon Warren, rector of St Anne's Church in Limehouse, has the Wharf within his parish. "I've raised people's awareness to the lack of spiritual facility," he said. "There needs to be a centre of community and there isn't anything." He hopes to get space for a chapel.

HISTORY OF THE WHARF

1982 Thatcher government sets up enterprise zone in the Docklands
1984 Reichmann brothers take over Canary Wharf development and invest £1.6bn
1991 One Canada Square, Britain's tallest building, is completed
1992 Canary Wharf collapses with debts of £576m
1993 Banks put together £1.1bn rescue package for Canary Wharf
1995 Reichmanns lead investor group to buy back Canary Wharf for £800m
1999 Canary Wharf to float on stock market, valuing development at up to £2.6bn

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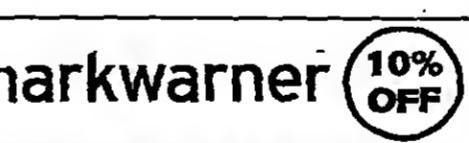
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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

John Willcock
CLARE GARNER

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US bombers step up war against Iraq

THE US launched a large-scale escalation of its aerial war against Iraq yesterday, attacking several sites in the north of the country.

Iraq said that the strikes had damaged its ability to export oil, which it uses to pay for food for its increasingly impoverished population.

The day-by-day bombing of Iraqi air defences has become an undeclared war, allowing the US and Britain to launch attacks almost at will in the no-fly zones over the country. Iraq does not recognise the zones, and has targeted allied aircraft with radar, anti-aircraft fire and surface-to-air missiles.

But for most of the past two months, the US and Britain have been dropping at most a dozen bombs and missiles on Iraq in attacks in the north and south. Yesterday they launched attacks on a much broader scale, as the rules of engagement were apparently shifted. The attacks appear to be aimed at weakening Iraq's control of the north of the country, a large slice of which is already under Kurdish control.

A statement from the US European Command, which con-

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

attacks had disabled the oil pipeline which took oil to Turkey for export under the oil for food programme.

Iraq said that further damage had been done to its oil facilities yesterday. "American warplanes caused civilian casualties and other damage to a link in the control system of the Iraqi-Turkish pipeline resulting in the isolation of the metering station in Zakho (northern Iraq)," an Iraqi spokesman said.

The US said that the incidents happened "near Mosul", the northern Iraqi city. Though the US and Britain have not reported details in the past of what targets they were striking in jeopardy," said William Cohen, the US Secretary of Defense. "They are not simply going to respond to a triple-A [anti-aircraft artillery] site or to a SAM [surface-to-air missile] site," he said.

"They can go after command and control and communications centers as well that allow Saddam Hussein to try to target them and put them in jeopardy. They have

some flexibility and they will continue to have that flexibility."

Iraq has been trying to trap allied aircraft by using its own aircraft and other decoys to lure them into the field of fire of surface-to-air missiles.

Kurdish sources say that Iraq was using a multiple rocket launcher to draw allied aircraft, dumping dozens of missiles on the town of Duhuk in the process.

Iraq has threatened in the past to attack the facilities in Turkey, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia from which the allied aircraft operate, though it withdrew the threat against Turkey.

The US has deployed Patriot anti-missiles around Incirlik, the Turkish base where the US and Royal Air Force aircraft are located.

The US and British strikes

have become noticeably more wide-ranging over the past few weeks, extending to communications facilities and other military targets across the country. Targets just 50 miles outside Baghdad were attacked last week.

The greater purpose behind the US and British attacks remains opaque. America has said that it will start providing more support for the exiled

Iraqi opposition, and a meeting of the Iraqi National Congress, the largest group, will be held in Washington next month.

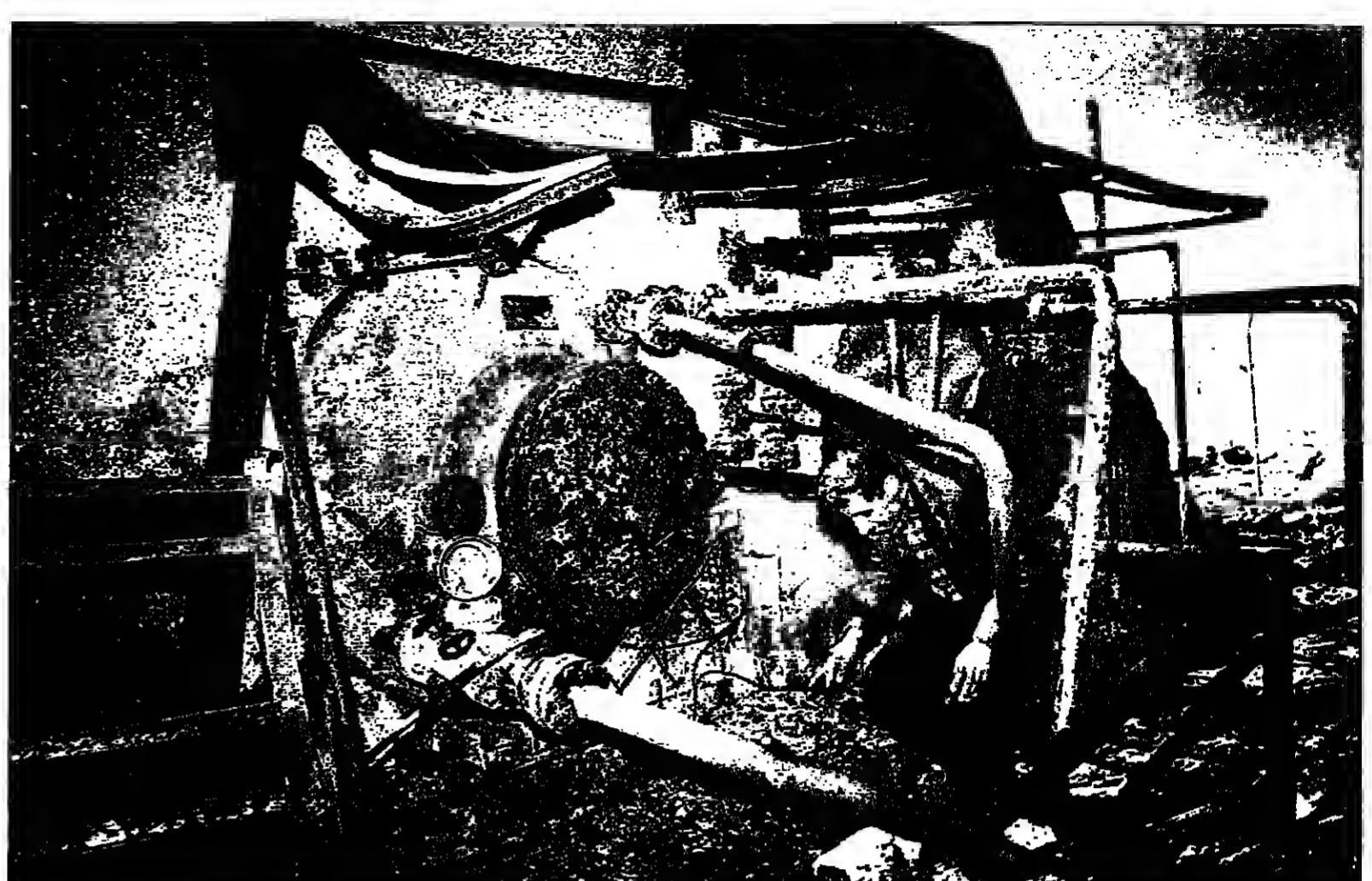
The US Congress has approved funds to arm and train the opposition, but it is still some way from disbursing this.

In the meantime, America is applying mounting pressure on the regime through military means.

Washington continues to

hint that the rule of Saddam Hussein is on its last legs.

An article in the magazine *US News and World Report* says that Saddam sacked senior naval officers who said they could not destroy a US aircraft carrier with their tiny navy, and the US has also reported that there have been riots around Iraq following the murder of an influential Shia cleric last month.



Israeli restraint brings end to air raids on Lebanon

BY PATRICK COCKBURN
in Jerusalem



In Israel, Marcelle Kabilo, embracing her daughter Galit, after spending a night in a shelter. Reuters

er, the most senior Israeli officer to be killed in Lebanon since 1982, is to be buried today.

The Israeli cabinet meeting yesterday produced a restrained statement, saying only that the Israeli army "is prepared to continue fighting terrorist forces in Lebanon".

Both Israel and Hezbollah say they want to preserve ground rules for the war in south Lebanon, which limits both sides from attacking civilian targets.

The Israeli air raids on Baalbek and other targets in theory were in retaliation for two Katyusha rockets on Israel on Sunday and not a response to the general's ambush.

The Hezbollah attack on the general is allowable under the rules agreed in 1996, but the firing of Katyushas into Israel is not.

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, said she was "urging all parties to

exercise restraint". Mr Netanyahu also knows the pre-election offensive in Lebanon launched three years ago by his predecessor, Shimon Peres, did not go well at the polls.

Hezbollah also shows signs of not wanting to extend the conflict beyond its killing of General Gerstein. It did not fire Katyushas in retaliation for the raids.

Supporters gave sweets to passing motorists in Beirut and staged victory processions but it does not want to provoke a prolonged air offensive.

In the Israeli cabinet Ariel Sharon, the Foreign Minister, and Avigdor Kahalani, the Interior Minister, both favour a unilateral withdrawal. This is opposed by Moshe Arens, the new Defence Minister.

Leading article, Review page 3

Comment, Robert Fisk, Review page 5

Avalanche boy leaves hospital

THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD Austrian boy who was pulled from under an avalanche and survived has been released in perfect health, a doctor said yesterday.

With the aid of a tracker dog, Alexander Walter was rescued from the snow in Valzur - site of one of last week's two avalanches in which 38 people died. He was clinically dead but was slowly warmed up and resuscitated by doctors nearby. Galtur, the other Tyrolean village hit by a fatal avalanche a day earlier.

Alexander's home was destroyed in the snow slide, and he and his mother have gone to stay with his grandparents. AP

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Religious war tears Spice Island apart



Indonesians struggling aboard a ship to escape religious violence on the Spice Island of Amboina where 200 have died

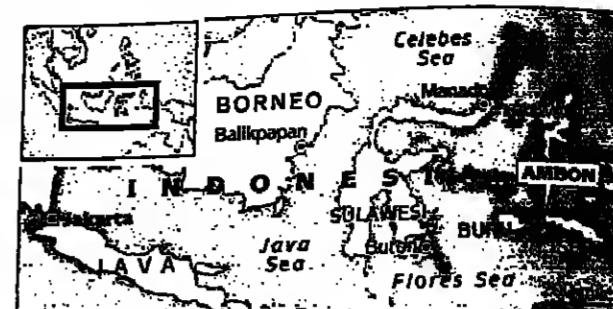
By RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Jakarta

AT LEAST 10 people were shot or tortured to death in the Spice Islands in what Indonesia's military commander said yesterday as the country's worst outbreak of communal violence.

General Wiranto, head of the Indonesian armed forces, warned that the battles between Christians and Muslims on the island of Amboina had the potential to tear apart the world's fourth most populous country. "We have to handle this problem," he said in the capital, Jakarta. "If not, it could create disintegration and instability in the nation."

Conflicting reports suggested more than 10 people have been killed since Sunday in at least two separate incidents in Amboina, the capital of Maluku province. "We have never faced such brutal mass rioting before," General Wiranto said at the launch of a new rapid reaction force of 5,000 elite anti-riot troops.

"Never before had people



used ethnicity, religion, race and group interest to attack one another. And never before was religion used as a reason to attack one another, and arguments in the market flared into mass riots," he said.

The terror in Amboina began in January. It has quickly developed into the grimness of the many local conflicts that have sprung up across the vast archipelago since the three-decade-long dictatorship under President Suharto came to an end last May. Ninety per cent of Indonesia's 210 million people are Muslim, but in Maluku, known in Dutch colonial times as the Spice Islands, there is a Christian majority, which lives alongside Muslim settlers from other parts of Indonesia.

The national police spokesman, Brigadier General Togar Sanipar, said yesterday that six people were tortured to death after a battle on Sunday between Muslims and Christians armed with spears and machetes. Other reports suggested a number of people were shot dead yesterday by police officers attempting to quell further disturbances.

Muslim witnesses quoted by the Associated Press news agency said that five people were killed after a mob of Christians burnt Muslim homes and threw petrol bombs at worshippers emerging from a mosque on the outskirts of Amboina town. One Christian man was killed, and four Muslims were shot dead by police, who have been ordered by General Wiranto to shoot rioters on sight.

The most alarming reports, passed on by Western diplomats, say Muslim and Christian police and soldiers have taken to firing on civilians of the other religion.

But the reports were not independently confirmed and in Jakarta, Brigadier General Togar denied there were any splits within the security forces.

"Up to now the armed forces are still solid," he said.

■ Unemployment in Indonesia hit 15.4 million people or 17.1 per cent of the workforce in 1998, while the number of poor rose to 40 per cent of the 194 million population. President B J Habibie said yesterday. Government estimates had put the jobless figure at 20 million.

Moderates set for victory in Iran elections

By JAMES ROBERTS

PRESIDENT KHATAMI of Iran was heading for another victory in his battle with the country's conservative clerical establishment yesterday. Early results of the elections for Tehran's city council showed moderate supporters of Mr Khatami were well ahead.

Pro-Khatami candidates, led by the former interior minister, Abdollah Nouri, were expected to take 12 of the 15 city council seats, according to state-run radio. Of the remaining three seats, two were likely to be won by candidates fielded jointly by the moderates and conservatives, and the manager of the popular Pirouzi football club, who was clinging on to the final seat in Tehran.

State radio said about 25 million voters, or 65 per cent, turned out for the local polls, introduced by Mr Khatami to help to break the centralised grip of the conservative establishment. Thirty-nine million people, aged 15 and over, were eligible to vote on Friday.

Mostafa Tajzadeh, deputy interior minister and head of the electoral commission, said women and independent candidates were leading in many provincial towns, where counting was almost over. "There are

a few towns or cities where women are not represented. In some cities they hold a majority or are even the front-runners. This is a giant step towards participation in the country's public administration," he said. In Tehran, two women candidates - Jamileh Radivar and Fatemeh Jalaipour - are among the top 15.

In the holy city of Mashhad, the stronghold of the influential conservative cleric Ayatollah Abbas Vaez-Tabasi, the four front-runners are independent, followed by reformers and conservatives, according to Abvar newspaper.

"Independents broke the grip of main factions in the provinces. This is a giant step towards decentralisation of power," Mr Tajzadeh said. "The monopoly [on power] was rejected through the democratic process."

Reports from central Isfahan, the most politicised city after Tehran, showed reformers leading by a wide margin. Local journalists said pro-Khatami candidates were poised to capture seven of 11 seats on the city council, with the balance going to conservatives.

IN BRIEF

Obasanjo declared poll winner

NIGERIA'S NATIONAL electoral commission yesterday proclaimed the former military ruler General Olusegun Obasanjo the winner of a weekend presidential election, brushing aside protests from the only other candidate, Olusegun Obasanjo, who alleged massive poll-rigging.

Stolen Generation seek damages

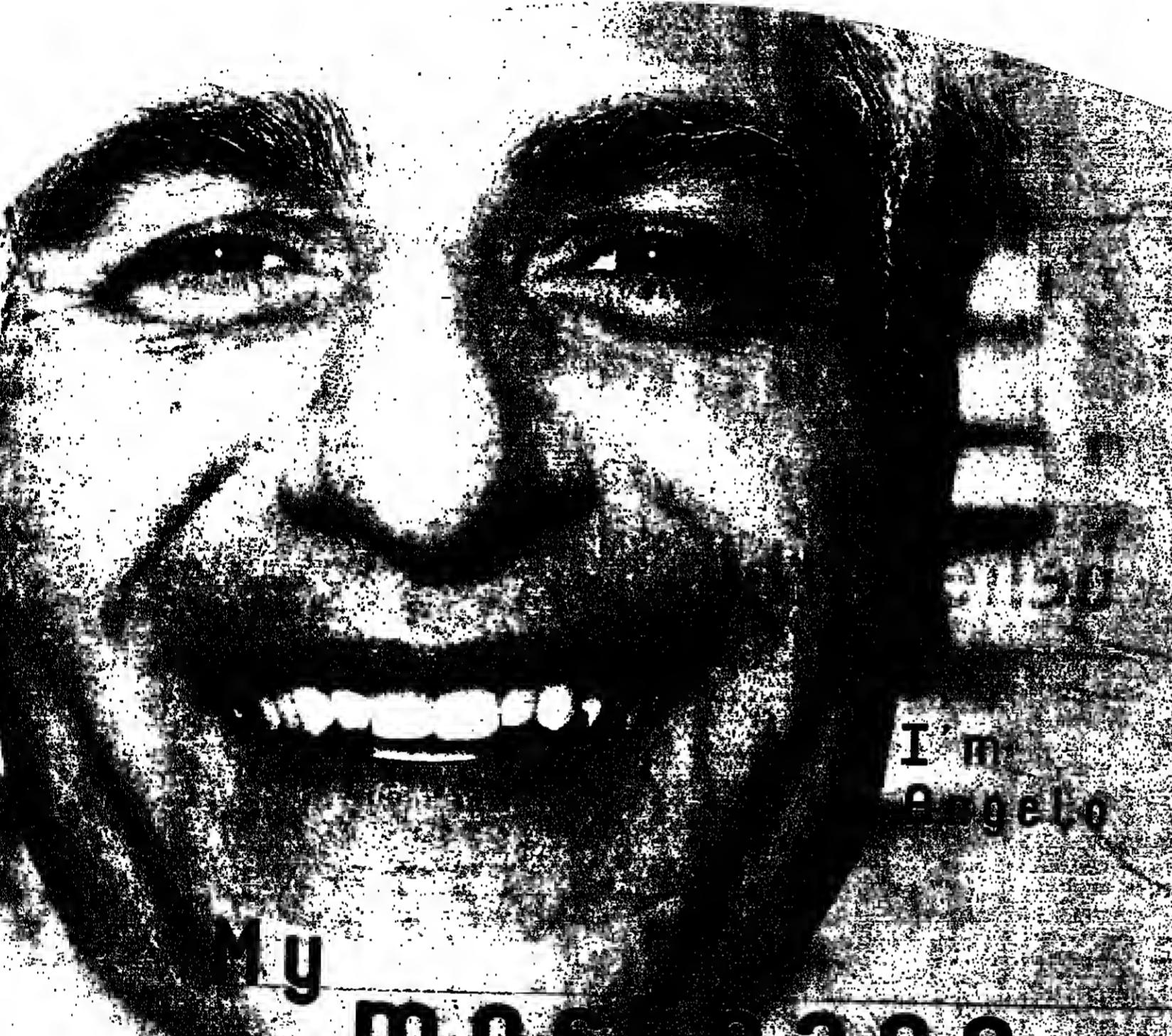
TWO ABORIGINES, Lorraine Cubillo, 60, and Peter Gunner, 51, from Australia's "Stolen Generation", opened a court case, seeking damages from the government for being forcibly removed from their parents and raised as whites. If successful, thousands could take legal action.

Dispensation for Mother Teresa

THE POPE has granted a special dispensation in the case of Mother Teresa from the Catholic Church rule that five years must pass after a person's death before the bureaucratic procedure that can lead to sainthood can begin. The nun died two years ago.

Turkey's £56m aid to Kurd region

BULENT ECEVIT, the Turkish Prime Minister, unveiled details of a £56m economic development plan for the south-east where Kurds are concentrated. Since the capture of the Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan last month, the government has stressed the need for development.



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part Police chief sacked in racism row

AS POLICE in New York City try to refute allegations of racism prompted by the shooting last month of an unarmed West African by four white officers, the chief of New Jersey's state police was without a job yesterday after being fired for publicly blaming drug trafficking on ethnic minorities.

The abrupt dismissal of Colonel Carl Williams by the Governor of New Jersey, Christie Todd Whitman, has thrown a fresh spotlight on simmering tensions between the African-American community and state and city police forces around the country.

Colonel Williams was sacked after saying blacks and Hispanics were more likely than whites to be involved in the cocaine and marijuana market.

His sacking will feed a widening debate in New York about racism in law enforcement that echoes the scandal engulfing the Metropolitan Police in London in response to the Lawrence report. Black and Hispanic leaders in the US have long complained about unfair police harassment of non-whites.

New York, where the force has been credited with a dramatic lowering of crime rates, witnessed large protests early last month after the shooting of Amadou Diallo in the hallway of his apartment building in the Bronx. The officers now under investigation are being asked to

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

explain why they fired 41 shots at Diallo, who apparently was breaking no law and was carrying no weapon.

Black leaders in New Jersey had already been calling for the sacking of Colonel Williams, the highest police officer in the state, arguing that he had turned a blind eye to so-called "racial profiling" by state troopers on the interstate highway system.

Condemned as illegal, "profiling" refers to the singling out of non-white drivers by police officers watching for anyone violating traffic laws.

Until last weekend, the police chief enjoyed the support of Governor Whitman. She abandoned him after the publication of an interview he gave to *The Star-Ledger* newspaper in Newark on Sunday. Remarks that Colonel Williams made in the interview drew an instant and furious response from minority leaders.

"The comments were insensitive and absolutely counter to bolstering confidence in law enforcement," the Governor's spokesman said. "There are vast segments of the New Jersey public whose confidence in the system is weakened."

Speaking to the newspaper, Colonel Williams said it would be naive not to recognise that

race is a factor in drug activity in the state. "Two weeks ago, the president of the United States went to Mexico to talk to the president of Mexico about drugs. He didn't go to Ireland. He didn't go to England," Colonel Williams said.

"Today with this drug problem, the drug problem is cocaine or marijuana. It is most likely a minority group that's involved with that," he went on.

"They aren't going to ask some Irishman to be part of their gang because they don't trust him."

Black members of the New Jersey assembly have promised hearings into racism in the police force.

Colonel Carl Williams, who has been sacked as New Jersey police chief after making comments on drugs and race

Daniel Hulshizer/AP

Man charged over arms smuggling

BY DAVID USBORNE

esterday to Boston, was attempting to smuggle the goods - fibre-optic gyroscopes - on his own behalf or for the Chinese military.

The gyroscopes can be fitted to long-range missiles to enhance accuracy. They can also be fitted to smart bombs and aircraft guidance systems.

According to police charges, Mr Yao tried to buy the gyroscopes from a Massachusetts firm but approval for the sale was denied by the State Department.

He apparently then approached another supplier, but that company was a dummy corporation set up by Customs for the purpose of entrapping Mr Yao.

A CHINESE national was facing charges in Boston yesterday after customs officials said they had caught him trying to smuggle sensitive equipment out of the United States that could be used in upgrading missile guidance systems.

The arrest of the man, identified as Yao Yi, comes at an embarrassing moment as the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, pays an official visit to Peking. Claims that China has tried illegally to obtain sensitive US weapons technology is a delicate issue between the Chinese and US governments.

It was not clear whether Mr Yao, who was arrested last week in California and brought yes-

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Chris Galea
Regional Director

Michelin honours poetic chef of Auvergne

A SELFTAUGHT chef who finds inspiration - and wild herbs - while running in his native hills in the southern Auvergne won the highest accolade in French cooking yesterday.

Michelin Bras, 52, was given the coveted third Michelin star for his mountain-top, hotel-restaurant near Laguiole, 3,700ft up in the Aveyron hills of south-western France.

His elevation by the 1999 Michelin Guide marks a - possibly deliberate - turning away from the globe-trotting, superstar chefs who have made the gastronomic news in France in recent years. Mr Bras, who learnt cooking mostly from his mother, specialises in elaborate versions of regional dishes and rarely strays from home territory.

Bespattered and given to poetic utterances, Mr Bras is known, to his annoyance, as the "herbologist" of French cooking. His use of wild and unusual plants, such as meadow-sweet, started a

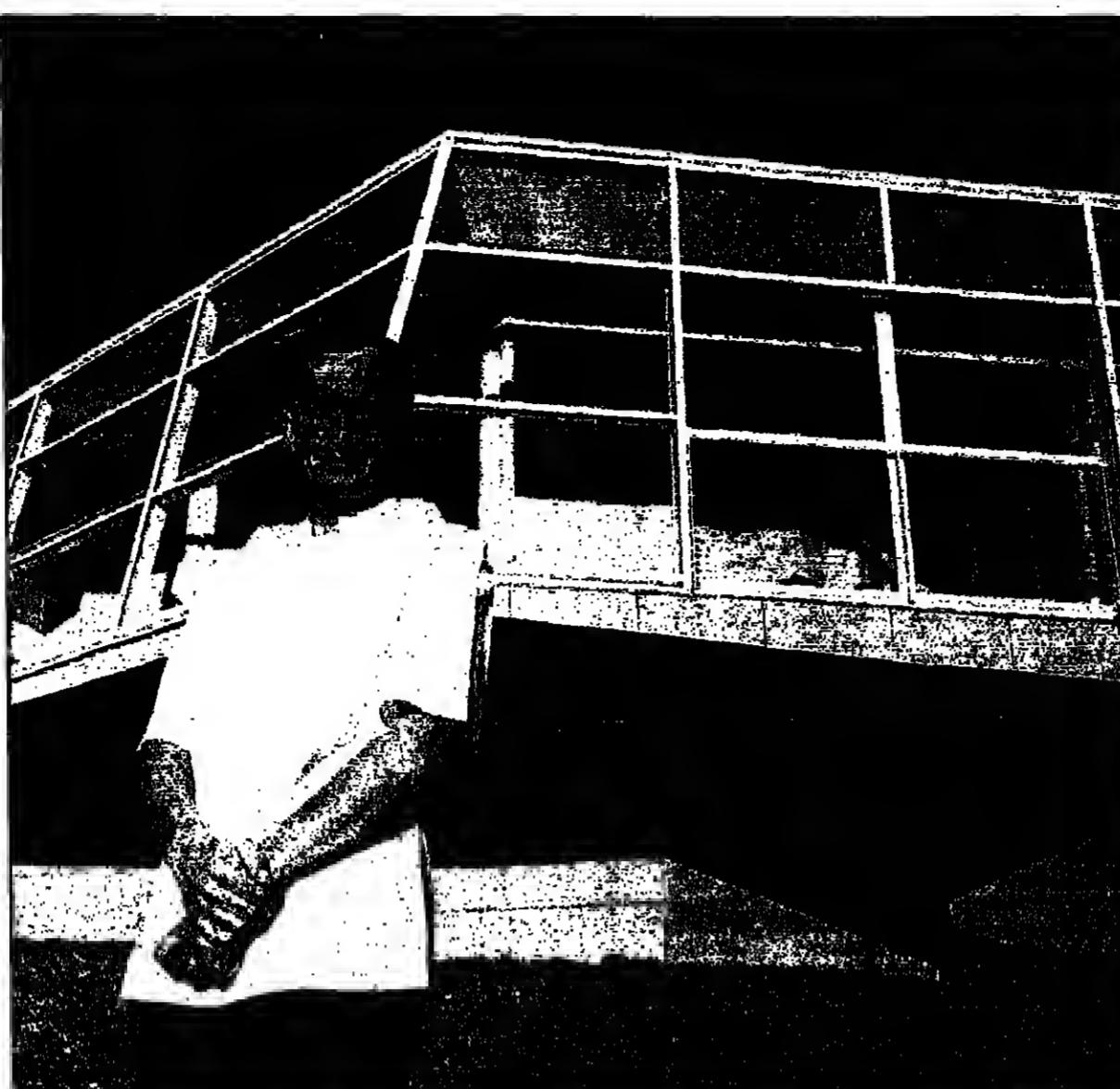
herbal trend among better-known, and more expensive, restaurants in the big cities.

"I run several times a week in the mountains and it is from these runs that I harvest ideas and emotions," he said last week, when news of his probable emblement by Michelin leaked out. "That's how I discovered meadow-sweet. I still clearly remember the circumstances of this encounter - the sky, the light and that leaden scent, heavy with honey."

Mr Bras is best known for two dishes, "Biscuit de chocolat coulant" (Biscuit of melted chocolate) and "Gargouillot de jeunes légumes" (which means, literally, a gurgling of bubbling of young vegetables).

His restaurant maintains the informality of a country inn: customers are invited to clean their knife and fork on a piece of bread between courses.

Prices, although hardly cheap, are reasonable com-



Michelin Bras, whose restaurant near Laguiole, south-western France, has joined the Michelin elite

At last, a good hairdresser

STREET LIFE SAMOTECHNY LANE

SINCE LAST August's economic crash, some Russians have had the faith and courage to launch new businesses. It would be an exaggeration to say the spring of recovery has arrived. Rather, a few ventures are tentatively emerging like snowdrops pushing up from under snow.

Of two in the Samotechny Lane area, one is a new hairdressing salon. Before Alexander opened "Persona Lab", we all used to go to Aunt Lyuda's. She may have been a wizard at dyeing the beehives of the local female trolley-bus drivers. But she always made a mess of my simple bob. Then I would go to some flashy haunt of the New Russians and pay \$100 (250) to have my hair "corrected". Outrage at the price, however, would mean that next time I was back with the trolley-bus drivers, trusting my hair to the cheap and cheerful Lyuda.

Alexander now offers an exit from that vicious circle. Just before Christmas, he opened a salon giving the kind of cuts he learnt while studying in London, at prices that middle-class Russians, at least, can afford. He economised on decor - the walls are white - to concentrate on styling cutting. "Everything was overblown before," he said. "Who could afford those inflated prices?" Now he has a steady stream of clients, able to pay the equivalent of \$30, and is feeling optimistic.

Further down the road is Belinda. It used to be the biggest supermarket in the area and, frankly, was a bad joke. You had to be a masochist to shop there. The prices for the imported groceries were astronomical, yet the service was positively abusive.

When the rouble plunged, a funny thing happened. For two short weeks in September, Belinda, which still had stocks at old prices, became the cheapest shop in the area. Word spread quickly. Poor housewives flocked there to stock up on rice and macaroni

and try, perhaps for the first time, more exotic items such as pâté de foie gras.

When the last goods were sold off, Belinda went out of business. Since then, a lot of renovation has been going on. Last week, Italian leather sofas went in. Then shelves with cheap mugs, washing powder and shampoo appeared. What was going on?

I walked in. A young assistant called Dima greeted me with a smile. In the back, I met Maria Belova, the equally welcoming manageress. "Down boy," she commanded, the black alsatian at her side. He was not a guard dog, she said, but a stray she had found injured and adopted. The atmosphere in the shop had certainly become friendlier.

What gave Ms Belova, who used to work in a Russian jewellery factory and also lived for a while in London, the confidence to open her own store after other entrepreneurs had been bitten? "We can't just sit and accept that our country is going down the drain. We have to try again."

Ms Belova, smart in a black and white hound-tooth checked suit, said lessons had been learnt from the crisis: "Businesses should not try to make too much money too fast. They should deal with reliable partners. And they should be flexible."

She went on to explain how she was creating a mini-department store, with a range of goods from expensive furniture to the cheapest household items. "We will watch and see what is popular. Later we might concentrate on one thing or another."

So far, customers are looking at the sofas as if they were museum pieces but they are snapping up the floral mugs at 60 roubles (22 each). "International Women's Day is coming up on 8 March," said Ms Belova. "For husbands wanting a change from the regulation three red tulips, the mugs make nice little presents for their wives."

HELEN WOMACK

Kosovar villagers flee Yugoslav military

YUGOSLAV SOLDIERS and police appear to be clearing villages in Kosovo along the border with Macedonia of their Albanian inhabitants.

About 5,000 villagers, fearing military attack, have fled their homes in the past few days, seeking refuge across the border with friends and neighbours. Many, however, are camping outdoors within the

BY EMMA DALY
in Gajre

borders of Kosovo. In one gully, women and children waited as their men cut down branches for temporary shelters. The group of 300 had come from the village of Gajre, close to the main road leading south from the province's capital, Pristina, to Macedonia. They

were preparing to spend a second night in the snow. Back in the village, rebel fighters from the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) patrolled the streets, but few civilians remain. Ismet Calaku, who returned yesterday to find the body of his brother - presumably shot dead by Yugoslav forces attacking the village - said: "Where can we go? Do you think we are safe anywhere?"

Further north, near the village of Velika Hoca, international mediators succeeded in preventing a feared attack by the Serb security forces, after the murder of a Serb civilian. KLA members yesterday handed over the body of the Serb, who was taken hostage last week. They released his companion, who had been badly beaten. The exchange was negotiat-

ed by verifiers from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Both Serbs were from Velika Hoca, a Serb enclave on a hill held by the KLA. The two were kidnapped after the seizure last week of three Albanians, two of whom were found dead yesterday. ■ The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, who begins a three-day visit to Russia today, will attempt to persuade Moscow to contribute troops to Kosovo - something seen as a crucial ingredient in securing acceptance by the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, of a foreign peace-keeping force. But Mr Cook will have to overcome Russian hostility to the overall Nato command of the force demanded by alliance members, led by the US.

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Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner
News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098a good
dresserLIFE
CLOTHING

BRIEFING

House prices fall in February

UK HOUSE prices fell by 0.5 per cent last month, according to the latest figures from Halifax, taking the annual rate of house price inflation down to 3.6 per cent. Halifax said February's fall in house prices offset the 0.4 per cent rise in January, and warned that the market was going through an unsettled period.

In the longer term, however, Halifax is relatively bullish about house prices, estimating that house price inflation would reach 4 per cent by the final quarter of 1999. The average price paid for a house in the UK last month was £173,004, Halifax said.

Hays to spend £200m in Europe

HAYS, the support services group, is planning to spend £200m on acquisitions in Europe this year.

The group, whose interests cover the distribution, personnel and document handling sectors, is looking principally at private businesses to add to its £92m acquisition spree in the first half of its financial year. Hays yesterday reported a 20 per cent increase in first-half profits to £110m, with the personnel division raising profits by 30 per cent. Ronnie Frost, the chairman (pictured), said he did not expect to see a recession in Britain.

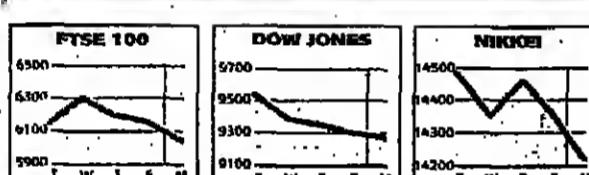
SAB edges to premium on debut

SHARES IN South African Breweries edged to a small premium on their first day of trading on the London stock market yesterday.

SAB, the world's fourth-largest brewer, which is moving its primary stock market listing to London, placed 35 million shares at 42p, raising £150m. The shares touched 46p before closing at 44p.

The company, whose brands include Castle beer, is valued at £3.5bn at yesterday's closing price, making it a candidate for inclusion in the FTSE 100 index.

STOCK MARKETS

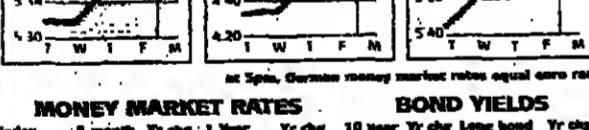


Source: Jones Index and graph at [ft.com](http://www.ft.com)

INDICES

Index	Close	Change	Chg %	52 wk High	52 wk Low	Yield %
FTSE 100	6060.90	-114.20	-1.85	6319.80	4859.20	2.65
FTSE 250	3258.40	10.10	0.19	3520.90	2427.60	3.21
FTSE All Share	2878.80	-45.00	-1.54	2978.20	2310.40	2.73
FTSE SmallCap	2278.05	-41.35	-1.85	2386.52	2149.53	2.77
FTSE Fleeting	1249.40	4.80	0.39	1517.10	1046.20	4.43
FTSE AllM	829.60	6.10	0.74	1146.90	761.30	1.53
FTSE Eurotop 100	2770.66	-33.79	-1.21	3078.27	2018.15	2.13
FTSE Eurotop 300	1207.92	-14.71	-1.20	1332.07	880.63	2.00
Dow Jones	9891.09	-15.76	-0.17	9817.90	7400.30	1.67
Hong Kong	13231.75	-1165.39	-8.02	13852.35	12767.90	1.00
Dax	10030.46	-181.97	-1.64	11926.16	6554.57	3.49
S&P 500	4784.31	-227.50	-4.60	5217.83	3833.71	1.96
Amex	1229.82	-8.52	-0.69	1283.91	923.32	1.29
Invonto 300	2273.59	-18.14	-0.82	2533.44	1357.00	1.29
Brazil Bovespa	6322.10	-36.99	-0.63	7387.70	5320.00	1.71
Belgium Bel20	3200.03	-9.21	-0.28	3112.14	4575.69	6.85
Amsterdam	3271.81	-8.81	-0.64	3601.65	355.58	2.15
Frankfurt Dax	4032.02	-60.59	-1.49	4404.94	2881.21	1.96
Malta Malt 25	3276.00	-267.00	-7.62	3612.00	24175.00	1.00
Madrid Ibex 35	2938.90	-28.40	-0.58	10899.90	6869.90	1.72
Irish Overall	3308.23	-27.62	-0.82	3581.70	3732.57	1.53
S Korea Composite	520.06	0.00	0.00	551.95	277.37	0.18
Australia ASX	2911.10	31.20	1.08	2948.70	2386.70	3.17

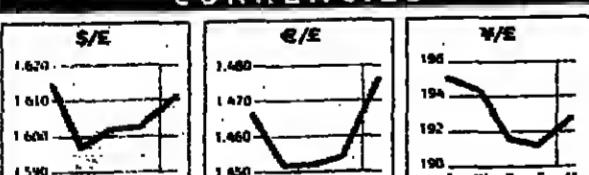
INTEREST RATES



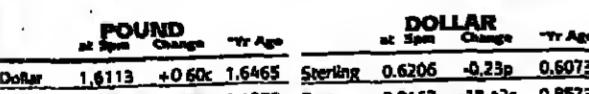
MONEY MARKET RATES

Source: Bloomberg.com

CURRENCIES



OTHER INDICATORS



TOURIST RATES

Source: Bloomberg.com

BUSINESS

GEC pays £1.3bn for US telecoms supplier

By MICHAEL HARRISON
Business Editor

GEC YESTERDAY made its first strategic move since the sale of its Marconi defence electronics business to British Aerospace by announcing the £1.3bn purchase of a US telecommunications equipment supplier.

The acquisition of Ohio-based RELTEC is being financed from GEC's £2.7bn cash mountain. The move is its first foray into the American telecoms market - the biggest in the world, accounting for half of all global traffic.

Lord Simpson, chief executive of GEC, described the purchase as "a good first step" and said the group planned to move quickly to build sales back up to the £1bn level they were at before the BAe-Marconi merger.

GEC is paying \$29.50 a share for RELTEC, which is 80 per cent owned by the US buyout specialists Kohlberg Kravis Roberts. This represents two times sales of \$1bn (£610m) a year and a 36 per cent premium to RELTEC's closing price on Friday.

Once the deal is completed, half GEC's turnover will be in the US. Telecoms will represent about 60 per cent of group sales.

The RELTEC purchase will give GEC access to the "local loop" - the last-mile connection to domestic and residential customers that is growing at a phenomenal rate because of the explosion in data, video and voice traffic.

Lord Simpson indicated that GEC's next acquisition was likely to be a hi-tech US business supplying equipment for Internet access. But he also said he was keen to expand GEC's presence in Europe, particularly in the local access market through telecommunications operators such as Ameritech, AT&T and several of the US "Baby Bells".

Following the Marconi defence electronics sell-off, GEC consists of three divisions - communications, information systems and a rump of businesses including its Hotpoint domestic appliances joint venture and Avery Berkele weighing machines, grouped together



GEC chief Lord Simpson described the RELTEC takeover as 'a good first move' into the US telecoms market

under the GEC Capital banner.

Although communications is likely to be the focus of GEC's growth, Lord Simpson said the group also aimed to build up the information systems division.

This consists primarily of three US businesses - Gilbarco petrol pumps, Picker medical imaging equipment and Videonet, which together employ around 10,000.

Lord Simpson dismissed reports of a rift between himself and GEC finance director John

Mayo as "fantasy" and a load of nonsense". He said: "John is an exciting guy to work with who deserves a huge pat on the back. Personally, we also get on very, very well."

He said he remained hopeful that the £7.7bn BAe-Marconi deal would escape referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, but the RELTEC deal was not dependent on the defence merger being approved.

Outlook, page 17

Upbeat surveys make rate cut unlikely

By LEA PATERSON

THE WORST could be over for UK manufacturing according to the latest figures from the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, fuelling speculation that the Bank of England will leave interest rates unchanged tomorrow following its monthly rate-setting meeting.

Near-record consumer credit numbers provided further evidence of the UK's improving economic prospects, and the FTSE tumbled almost 115 points as investors reassessed the outlook for interest rates.

Sterling strengthened 0.50 to 88 against the euro, and also made up ground against the dollar. On Wall Street, the Dow Jones was trading lower in the early afternoon following the release of stronger-than-expected US data.

In the UK, the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply survey of manufacturing found signs of stronger demand, particularly for exports.

The CIPS Purchasing Managers' Index - an indicator of overall activity in the sector - rose 1.5 points to 45.5, its highest level since last September.

As the PMI remains below its neutral level of 50, the manufacturing sector remains in decline, CIPS said. But the rise in the index between January and February suggests that the pace of decline has slowed.

Speaking last night at a KPMG profitability seminar, Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said: "We expect the slowdown to be comparatively mild and short-lived."

Separate consumer credit figures published by the Bank of England provided further evidence the UK economy could be on course for a soft landing.

Consumer credit rebounded in January by £1.4bn, almost double December's level, and there was a near-record rise in the value of bank loans and overdrafts. Analysts said the data was consistent with January's bounce-back in retail sales and indicated that sales should continue to grow.

Meanwhile, in the US, rate cut hopes were dealt another blow by robust manufacturing and income data. American incomes grew strongly in January, while the US Purchasing Managers' Index for manufacturing surged back over the critical 50 mark for the first time in nine months.

In Europe, analysts said the European Central Bank seemed unlikely to cut rates on Thursday following stronger-than-expected money supply figures and hawkish comments from ECB officials.

Christian Noyer, ECB vice-president, said there seemed no reason to cut interest rates "at the moment".

Mirror rejects £972m Trinity bid

By PETER THAL LARSEN

who stepped down in January.

Philip Graf, the group's chief executive, insisted the company was not making a hostile bid. However, he withdrew an earlier offer to Sir Victor Blank, Mirror's chairman, to take over as chairman of the combined group. Mr Graf said he still wanted to make John Alwood, Mirror's new chief executive, deputy chief executive of the new company.

Mr Graf said he was "surprised" at the speed of Mirror's response, which was unlikely to have given the company time to canvass shareholder opinion. He also said Mirror Group had 20 per cent shareholding in Scottish Media Group, the television and newspaper group, was a strategic asset. "It is not part of our acquisition strategy to sell bits of the group."

Trinity's offer consists of 0.35 new shares and 40p in cash for every Mirror share.

Mirror shares rose by 5p to 205p yesterday, helped by a strong set of preliminary results for 1998 that showed underlying pre-tax profits rising by 13.4 per cent to £23.8m. At yesterday's closing price the offer values

Mirror shares at 213p each. Mirror shares closed up 9p at 203p.

Mr Alwood is expected to set out his strategic view for Mirror on Thursday when the company publishes its preliminary results. The company is still talking to Regional Independent Media (RIM), the venture capital-backed newspaper group whose titles include the *Yorkshire Post*, which has already had a 200p share cash offer for Mirror rejected.

RIM is this week expected to ask the Department of Trade and Industry to refer its interest in Mirror to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, triggering an investigation which is likely to take more than three months. Any bid by Trinity would also have to be cleared by the MMC, although the company has yet to decide whether it will pursue its offer.

Mr Graf insisted that an offer giving investors shares in the combined company would be more attractive in the long term. "Shareholders have a choice; they can cash out or stay in a business of this nature, this size, and this opportunity. We believe this is the right thing to do," he said.

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The company is still talking to Regional Independent

First Choice Holidays receives bid approach

By NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

Preussag, the German travel group which is taking control of the Thomas Cook travel agency business, has been seen as a possible bidder for First Choice, which only has a small retail presence.

First Choice, Britain's third largest tour operator, said the talks were "highly conditional" and that it would make a further announcement in due course.

First Choice shares rose 24.5p on Friday, valuing the company at 1

Sun Life may sell off GRE business

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

pre-sold GRE's US and German businesses ahead of last month's agreed takeover to Liberty Mutual and AXA Colonia respectively.

Mr Wood said that while a sale was currently not the most likely outcome, all options were being considered. It is hoped to complete the review in five months. He said: "We have had a chance to consider the options. But at the end of the review we will have a clear view as to how we hope to move forward."

The group is also reviewing its options for GRE's Irish business, which is the biggest general insurer in Ireland. Some observers said it was the most attractive part of the entire GRE operation. The Irish business has total annual premium incomes from £50m to £55m.

Mark Wood, Sun Life chief executive, said yesterday the group would not be integrating GRE's life activities with its existing life and pensions operations, and had instead placed the business in strategic review.

Sun Life - quoted in London but majority owned by AXA, the French insurance giant -

believed that by improving the underwriting performance in the GRE businesses to the levels achieved by Sun Life, the group would be able to improve returns and meet the demanding hurdle rates set by AXA. He said the GRE deal would boost earnings even if general insur-

ance rates remained flat for the next two years.

"This is a turnaround story," he said. "What we believe the deal enables us to do is to achieve economies of scale and compete at ever decreasing levels of margins."

Sun Life has now completed

the integration of the Sun Life and AXA Equity & Law businesses following the 1997 merger. The group said yesterday that 90 per cent of the original objectives had been met and cost savings were now projected to be running at £47m a year - £10m more than planned.

Year's operating profits for the group as a whole were up by 14 per cent to £247.1m, with cost savings and a strong performance on life and asset management sides making up for weaker general insurance; this suffered a £25m underwriting loss. The previous year has

been restated pro-forma as if Equity & Law had been included for the entire year.

Pre-tax, the group reported profits down from £363.5m to £225.6m, a fall of 11 per cent. The total dividend for the year is 13.5p a share, an increase of 15 per cent.

Chief executive Mark Wood (left) and chairman Lord Douro announced an 11 per cent fall in SL&P profits to £325.6m. *Mark Chivers*

SHARES IN Burmah Castrol, the lubricants to chemicals group, surged 5 per cent yesterday when the group unveiled better-than-expected results and a £280m return of capital to shareholders.

The group will distribute the capital - £30m more than expected - in May by way of a share split, yielding 13p a share. Ordinary shares will be split into new ordinary and capital shares, and the capital shares will be cancelled for cash or loan notes.

Tim Stevenson, chief executive, said: "We took the view last spring that we had an extra-

ordinary strong balance sheet that from the shareholders' point of view was inefficient. The figure of £280m was the right figure given our ongoing acquisition plans."

Burmah, which makes and distributes fuels and specialist chemicals, was hit last year by the economic troubles of Southeast Asia, the strength of sterling and cost-cutting by the international oil majors.

But the company's results

revealed that it had escaped the worst of the harm. While operating profits took a £5m hit from

the strength of sterling, profits rose by 1 per cent at constant exchange rates. Mr Stevenson said cost-cutting in Thailand and Malaysia had made up for falls in volumes.

"This demonstrates how resilient our businesses are, given that 1998 was a particularly difficult year in Asia-Pacific. And the results were a lot more robust than a lot of people thought they would be," he said.

The shares closed up 4p at 83p as the City welcomed the return of capital. The group is seeking permission to buy back further shares in the market later this year.

The group will spend £110m initially to achieve savings of £20m to £30m a year. It also plans bolt-on acquisitions to gain market share in Europe and the US.

Full-year profits, down by 7 per cent at £245.9m, were also better than analysts expected, and the dividend will rise to 4p a share, up by 6 per cent.

Burmah Castrol, no longer classified as an oil business, has also embarked on a major restructuring programme. Instead of geographical divisions, the group has created four separate businesses for consumer, industrial, commercial and marine markets.

The group will spend £110m initially to achieve savings of £20m to £30m a year. It also plans bolt-on acquisitions to gain market share in Europe and the US.

Full-year profits were up by 28 per cent to £42.6m, above analysts' predictions. Profits were boosted by a debut contribution from Dennis for two months of the year to December.

John Simpson, the chief executive, said: "We drove cash flow better than people expected. Our debt is down and analysts are now writing that we have a strong balance sheet."

Mayflower is stripping out some costs from the merger, closing Dennis's head office. But Mr Simpson said the main objective was to open up new markets. The combination of Dennis, a bus chassis maker, and Mayflower, which makes bodywork, would allow buses to be built in one piece.

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BRIEFING FOR
IN-DEPTH FINANCETHE BANK OF ENGLAND IS TO
HOST A ONE-DAY SEMINAR
TODAY TO DISCUSS THE
IMPACT OF IN-DEPTH
FINANCE. IT WILL BE
HOSTED BY INSTITUTIONAL
INVESTORS, VENTURE CAPITALISTS
AND HIGH-TECH BUSINESS
LEADERS. THE SEMINAR
IS DESIGNED TO SPUR
INNOVATION IN THE SECTOR
BY EXAMINING THE MAIN
HIGH-TECH COMPANIES
AND THE BANK IS
ENCOURAGING HIGH-TECH
COMPANIES TO SPUR
INNOVATION.

SAGE buys Tetra

SAGE, THE ACCOUNTING
SOFTWARE GROUP, HAS AGREED
TO BUY OUT ITS THREE-DIVISION
STRUCTURE WITH THE TAKEOVER OF
TETRA, THE BUSINESS SOFTWARE
COMPANY, FOR A MIXTURE OF
RENTED AND CASH WHICH
WILL GIVE THE COMPANY A 50 PER
CENT MARKET SHARE. SAGE'S CHIEF
EXECUTIVE, SIR TREVOR SAGE, SAID
TETRA'S SOFTWARE WOULD HELP
SAGE TO CAPTURE THE MARKET
SHARE FOR THE PROPERTY
MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE IN
THE UNITED STATES.

SAGE price

SAGE, THE TWO-LEADER
SOFTWARE GROUP, WHICH
WILL BE AT THE HEART OF
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High cost of Canary Wharf's success

WHAT WITH all the cranes, building work, the chattering of foreign tongues and the general air of conspicuous prosperity and consumption, it feels quite like the 1980s again down here at Canary Wharf. Certainly you wouldn't believe this was part of near recessionary Britain. The complex now even boasts its very own financial scandal - based around a group of high earning, high living CSFB traders allegedly calling themselves the Flaming Ferraris.

From where we sit, the level of activity is truly astonishing. Looking out from the Independent's City office in the South Eastern corner of the existing Canary Wharf tower, to our immediate left rises the near complete Citigroup office complex. Immediately to the East of that, work has already begun on the Salomon Smith Barney tower, which will eventually be linked to the Citigroup building via a connecting trading floor.

To its left, the foundations are being laid in the remains of a disused dock for Britain's largest ever non-governmental office block - the HSBC tower. Looking out towards the City, the high rise cranes litter the horizon. There are luxury hotels, apartments, more offices and more complexes going up right left and



OUTLOOK

centre. If ever there were a right time to tap the markets for extra money, this would seem to be it. Canary Wharf, in receivership less than seven years ago, is a success at last.

Unfortunately, this fairy tale comeback for Paul Reichmann and his fellow travellers, cannot be said to demand unquestioning admiration. The cost of success, to the taxpayer and other regions that might have benefited from such development, is a high one. To make it work, Canary Wharf has required the most expensive piece of road ever built - the Limehouse link.

On top of that comes the Jubilee line extension, a stretch of tunnelling of both unprecedented cost,

and outside servicing the wharf, of highly dubious general worth. Without these two pieces of infrastructure, Canary Wharf would still be a millstone round its bankers' necks. Massive tax breaks, from which construction of the HSBC tower will continue to benefit, has further subsidised the planned stock market flotation.

Still, it would be churlish to be unduly cynical. We are going to have to await publication of the prospectus to make any kind of investment judgement on this company, but on the face of it, the complex should be capable of attracting quite a following. Today's capital structure is completely different from the one that sunk the venture in the early 1990s. Most banking debt has been secured against rents, and what remains will be covered by the proceeds of the share sale.

Future developments will be financed on a highly conservative basis, with the company promising to keep speculative development (where properties are built without tenants to occupy them) to a minimum. The chances of the company going bust again would therefore seem remote. Its longer term prospects are another matter. With

rents for new tenants beginning to approach those of the City, the complex may need to demonstrate attractions other than just the promise of acres of cheap, modern office space to persuade financial institutions to keep moving east.

Mirror Group

SO MAYBE David Montgomery was right after all. The Ulsterman was forced to step down as chief executive of Mirror Group in January because he was supposedly blocking a merger between Mirror and Trinity, the regional newspaper publisher. Yesterday, the Mirror board, minus Mr Montgomery, rejected an increased offer from Trinity as inadequate. Even Phillips & Drew, the 23 per cent shareholder which was previously so in favour of a Mirror-Trinity combination, said the offer was too low.

What has changed? A cynical conclusion would be that Sir Victor Blank, Mirror's chairman, has cooled on the prospect of a deal with Trinity now that he is no longer being promised the role of chairman in the combined group. Like Mr Montgomery, he has come to believe that

Trinity should be forced to pay a premium for management control.

There's more to it than that, however. Regional Independent Media, backed by deep-pocketed venture capitalists, has already offered 200p in cash for each Mirror share, and is considering upping its bid. Even after yesterday's share price jump, Trinity's cash-and-shares offer is only worth 213p per Mirror share - well short of the 220p-230p that analysts think the company is worth.

Ultimately these are all just skirmishes in what remains a phoney war. The fact is that, until the Monopolies and Mergers Commission arrived. Now, alas, it is no more. Maybe British Aerospace will buck the trend, but even so it has undoubtedly paid Lord Simpson a full price for Marconi.

So the chief executive of New GEC, recently ennobled by New Labour, has proved himself a very astute seller of businesses. What the market must now judge is how good Lord Simpson is at buying them.

With 2.7bn in his back pocket - a bigger wad than he inherited from Lord Weinstein - and a further 2.6bn of credit on tap, it would be easy for him to overpay. Particularly so, when Lord Simpson is plainly in such a hurry to rebuild GEC back to the

same size it was before he sold the defence electronics arm to BAE for £7.7bn.

The beauty of the Simpson approach is that the market never sees him coming, which reduces the risk of overpaying. Of all the targets GEC was rumoured to be gunning for, RELTEC, an American telecoms equipment supplier, was not even on the radar screen. It may be big in Cleveland, Ohio, but it is a closed book to the investment community over here, and there was not a sniff of GEC's interest on the New York market.

In these days of astronomic valuations in the telecoms sector, paying two times sales for a business which is plugged into the fastest growing sector of the market, the local loop, does not look exorbitant.

With the US accounting for half GEC's turnover and growing, and more than 60 per cent of sales tied up in telecoms, Lord Simpson could be forgiven for thinking of doing a Victoria and relocating to New York. Luckily, he is too fond of travelling home to Scotland at weekends, and too mean to overpay.

MoD set to select £750m radar bid

THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE will this week choose between two rival US-led consortia for a £750m airborne radar contract.

BY MICHAEL HARRISON
Business Editor

by a Cabinet sub committee chaired by the Prime Minister.

The contest is between Raytheon and a consortium led by its US competitor, Lockheed Martin. A third bidder, comprising British Aerospace in partnership with Northrop Grumman, has fallen out of the race.

Raytheon and the Lockheed consortium, which is called TeamASTOR, gave evidence in camera to MPs on the Defence Select Committee yesterday.

Galen Ho, chief executive of Lockheed Martin Tactical Systems, said: "It would be a travesty to move and develop this world class capability offshore. TeamASTOR is the only solution that keeps design authority here."

The TeamASTOR consortium also includes Marconi as well as Racal, Logica and Marshall Aerospace. It is promising that 100 per cent of the work will be carried out in the UK, providing 2,000 direct high-technology jobs.

However, Raytheon is promising to create 2,400 jobs in the UK. It has signed up 85 UK companies as industrial partners and says that 75 per cent of the radar will be built in Britain.

Raytheon's bid also has the support of the leaders of three unions: Ken Jackson of the

AEEU, John Edmonds of the General, Municipal and Boilermakers and Roger Lyons of the MSF.

The airborne stand-off radar will be fitted into high-speed business jets and used to beam surveillance pictures and data back to military commanders in mobile ground stations.



Image analysts at their workstations inside a simulator of the Gulfstream IV aircraft built by TeamASTOR, one of two rival US-led consortia bidding for the Ministry of Defence's £750m airborne radar contract

BICC sells telecoms cable unit for £82m

THE RESTRUCTURING of BICC, the cables and construction group, continued yesterday with the surprise sale of its telecommunications cable business to Corning of the US for £22m, writes Michael Harrison.

The sale will further slim BICC down, leaving it with just an energy and data cables division and Balfour Beatty, now specialising in rail maintenance and building management.

Analysts were surprised that BICC had decided to quit the high growth telecoms sector of

the cable market, and the shares fell by 5p to 84.5p. But Alan Jones, chief executive, defended the "radical move" on the grounds that BICC did not have the resources to expand the division and invest in the latest optical technologies. He said the deal would reduce the volatility of BICC's earnings.

The business, which has 2,000 employees, made a £15m loss last year compared with a £17m profit in 1997, due to a 40 per cent decline in prices and the Asian economic downturn.

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Rate worries bring Footsie down to earth

INTEREST RATE worries, one of the market's favourite bugbears, returned to haunt Footsie yesterday, dragging the index down from last week's heady heights.

Blue chips were hit hard by a classic interest rate double whammy, as dealers started the week fretting about monetary policy on both sides of the Atlantic.

Red numbers invaded the dealing rooms' screens amid a growing belief that the Bank of England will put an end to the rate cut bonanza of the last few months tomorrow.

That rate-on-hold feeling was given a further boost by a relatively benign manufacturing sector survey. Across the pond, the odds of a Federal Reserve tightening are shortening by the minute and the latest batch of economic data has given the bears plenty of ammunition.

Footsie was caught in the crossfire, tumbling 114.2 points to 6,060.8. The blue-chip index has now fallen back to the levels reached before last week's record-breaking rally.

OFEX-LISTED Po Na Na, an operator of African theme bars, rose 2p to 102.5p after it unveiled merger talks with the rival chain, Break for the Border, up 1.5p at 42p. Break for the Border will have to pay more than £20m to take control of Po Na Na, which owns 15 venues across the country.

The African bars' company floated in 1996 and has a market value of £21m. It has talked to other quoted companies, which could enter the fray if the BFB talks collapse.

Banks and insurers, one of the drivers of the recent out-performance, led the retreat. Sellers were encouraged to book in profits by the end of the results season and the ex-dividend dates of a number of financial stocks.

Ashley National was an example of the ex-divi carnage, dropping 66p to 1137p. Halifax followed suit, ending 32p lower at 735p. NatWest was also a prominent constituent of the ex-divi brigade, tumbling 42p to 1250p. Royal Bank of Scotland was hit by profit taking and showed a 68p deficit to 1,150 - the biggest Footsie faller of the day.

The Woolwich unravelled, losing 13.5p to 381.5p as Credit Lyonnais advised a switch to Northern Rock, down 3.5p to 480p. Among the insurers, Sun Life & Provincial rose 2 per cent in early trade after good results before succumbing to the financials' bloodbath. The life assured currently buying GRE, finished 39p off at 486.5p.

GEC provided a glimpse of blue in Footsie's red sea. The \$2.1bn buy of the US telecom operator Reltec was received with thumbs-up by the market and the stock rang up a 1.8p rise to 516p. More is still to come as GEC looks to spend the £7.7bn received from British Aerospace for its Marconi subsidiary.

Smiths Industries, the

MARKET REPORT



FRANCESCO GUERRERA

aerospace group, was another high-flyer, reaching a dizzy 25.5p advance to 973p as it draws up plans for a fibra acquisition spree.

The Footsie hopeful South African Breweries kicked off its London career with a 15p rise to 447p. Most of the early froth was wiped off in later trading as SMG, among others, said sell. BT fell 17p to 1063p despite being tipped in a new Goldman Sachs portfolio, which also includes Unilever and the Swiss drug group Novartis.

Supermarkets were left on the shelves as rumours of an earnings-threatening price war grew louder. Asda, unchanged at 155.5p, is apparently preparing an assault on its rivals by slashing grocery prices. The campaign is tipped to hit Tesco, down 4.7p to 163.75p, and Safeway, up 1.8p to 226.25p. J Sainsbury, up 1p higher at 361.5p, and

MIXED NEWS for Chiroscience. The biotechnology company soared 8.5p to 234p on news that its anaesthetic Chirocaine is due to be approved by the US drug regulator. However, the product was dropped by Zeneca, the pharmaceutical giant, to appease the EU regulators that approved its merger with Astra.

Chiroscience is on the look-out for a new partner and in the meantime Zeneca will pay for the development of the drug.

the sector is all wrong and at these bargain-basement levels bids are more than likely. Burmah Castrol was the notable exception, putting on 4p to 859p after promising a 220m return of cash to shareholders and reporting good profits.

BICC got out of its awful telecommunications cables business, with \$133m in cash, but the shares, once in the Footsie, fell 5.5p to 84.5p.

Close Brothers, the blue-blooded bank, bled 3.25p to 632.5p despite good results and the appointment of former Warburg's supremo David Schlesinger as the new chairman.

Horace Smith, a uniform-maker, was the market's best stock in the market, posting a 54 per cent advance to 79.5p after selling its operating business and becoming a cash shell ready for a reverse takeover.

Trio, the money broker, cashed in a 2p rise to 9.25p after Nittan Capital bought almost 30 per cent from Regent Pacific at 10.25p.

ComputerInd crashed 59.5p to 100.5p after a profit warning, while Synstar, the computer services company, another 20p to 138.5p. It was floated on Friday at 165p.

The German giant Preussag, which has a stake in Thomas Cook, and the Swiss travel group Kuoni Reisen could provide the foreign opposition.

SEAO VOLUME: 867.2 million
SEAO TRADES: 81,042
GILTS INDEX: 112.90 -0.74

Somerfield, up 5.5p at 380p, are seen as more resilient.

Marks & Spencer kept falling from grace and ended an undignified 8.25p lower at 411.25p. The retailer was on the receiving end of a 70-page "sell" note by the broker WestLB. The title of the pamphlet "It's going to be painful" said it all.

No such doom and gloom among the undercard. The FTSE 250 got one over its bigger brother, rising 10.1 to 5,258.4, the Small Cap scraped 1.3 higher to 2,278.6.

Bid speculation and good results caused all the joy. First Choice, the tour operator, travelled 16 per cent higher to 180p, after admitting an approach. The talk is of a bid at between 175p and 180p with the UK rivals Airpax, up 18.5p to 45p and Thomson, which rose 1.5p to 180.5p, among the favourites.

The German giant Preussag, which has a stake in Thomas Cook, and the Swiss travel group Kuoni Reisen could provide the foreign opposition.

Smiths Industries, the

SHARE SPOTLIGHT

Source: Datastream



FRANCESCO GUERRERA

was given new impetus. The red-topped paper's shares rose a heady 20p to 120p, after it rejected a 210p share offer from Trinity. The bid put the heat on Regional Independent Media, the regional publisher, and the backer Cadover to increase their 200p approach.

RCM built a 29.5p advance to 709p as JP Morgan said "buy". A bid for fellow building materials producer Alexander Russell, up 15p at 137.5p, is near. No bid for Aggreko. The power hire group, once part of Christian Salvesen, surged 15p to 198p simply because it posted good results.

No such luck for BTP. The much-structured chemicals group plunged 20p to a five-year low of 295.5p. The tumble put it on top of the mid-cap's list of fallers as sellers stepped in ahead of the results season.

Some of its rivals fared better, with Laporte down 18p to 547.5p and Yule Catto down 0.5p to 250.5p. The chemistry between the market and

the FTSE index when the FTSE index committee meets next week.

Billiton is seen by analysts as a sell balanced exposure to the mining sector than rival Rio Tinto, which reported only a 10 per cent dip in profits last week. The company is less well understood in the City and is dominated by aluminium, coal and steel although the

group said yesterday that it could use its \$2bn war chest to become more diversified. It is looking at moving into iron ore, increasing its copper interests and adding to its coal operations.

It has already had a busy six months buying out minority shareholders in some of its interests and more buy-outs are on the agenda. Some \$1.5bn has

By NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

BILLITON, the mining group, reported a 34 per cent fall in first-half profits to £190m yesterday and warned that continued weakness in the aluminium price could affect the full-year figures.

Aluminium accounts for 41 per cent of Billiton's profits and the three-month price has fallen to \$1180 per tonne, the lowest aluminium price ever in real terms. Average commodity prices in January are continuing to run below those of the same month last year, although Billiton feels prices may have bottomed out.

"It's very hard to see prices getting a lot weaker than they are today. But the situation probably isn't going to improve dramatically in the immediate future," said Brian Gilbertson, chairman and chief executive.

Billiton shares have been threatened with relegation from the FTSE 100 index with the newly-listed South African Breweries poised to gain entry. That would place further pressure on the share price.

But recent strength - the shares only dipped a penny to 134.5p on yesterday's figures - may have saved the group from expulsion from the Blue

BILLITON: AT A GLANCE					
Market value: £2.9bn, share price 134.5p (-1p)					
Trading record	96	97	98	97	98
Turnover (£m)	3.3	3.2	3.3	1.65	1.4
Profit for the year (£m)	595.0	588.0	502.0	280.9	190.2
Earnings per share (p)	13.3	11.8	7.2	7.4	4.7
Dividends per share (p)	-	-	8.3	2.1	2.1
Operating profit breakdown , 8 months, £m					
Aluminium	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.8	0.8
Steel & Ferro alloys	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Nickel	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Coal	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Base Metals	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Other	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Share price					
Pence	280	260	240	220	200
1997	220	210	200	190	180
1998	180	170	160	150	140
1999	140	130	120	110	100
Source: Datastream	30	30	60	90	120

group said yesterday that it could use its \$2bn war chest to become more diversified. It is looking at moving into iron ore, increasing its copper interests and adding to its coal operations.

It has already had a busy six months buying out minority shareholders in some of its interests and more buy-outs are on the agenda. Some \$1.5bn has

been invested in the last six months as the company seeks to take advantage of low asset prices. Unit operating costs have been cut by 15 per cent although analysts say there is little fat left to cut.

The cycle could hardly be at a worse stage for Billiton, which spun off from the South African Gencor group in the summer of 1997.

But analysts say that hedge funds could start buying back in as they forecast the aluminium price. Already two US value funds, Franklin and Capital, have built sizeable holdings. This should provide beleaguered shareholders with some hope that the turn is far away.

But this optimism should be tempered by a potential stock overhang. Some of the large South African shareholders such as the International Development Corporation of South Africa have said they want to reduce their holding. And Kleinwort Benson, which advised on the float, also apparently has a 2.5 per cent stake which may find its way onto the market.

It has already had a busy six months buying out minority shareholders in some of its interests and more buy-outs are on the agenda. Some \$1.5bn has

Aegis set for £70m US buying spree

By PETER THAL LARSEN

AEGIS, the media planning group, is preparing to spend up to £70m on acquisitions this year as it seeks to build up its presence in the United States and extend its network into emerging markets.

Crispin Davis, Aegis chief executive, said the company was looking for bolt-on acquisitions in the US, which would help it achieve its target of becoming the market leader over the next five years. "The US is 40 per cent of the world advertising market," he said. "We've made a very encouraging start, but the upside is enormous."

In January, Aegis established itself as a major player in the US by winning an account with Pfizer, the pharmaceutical giant, worth \$280m (£173m) in annual revenues. However, Mr Davis said the group was still too small to pitch for the largest accounts awarded by the likes of Coca-Cola, Disney and General Motors.

Aegis has accumulated a cash pile worth £36.9m, helped by its strong cash flow, but the company believes it could comfortably cope with £50m of debt.

Mr Davis said Aegis was preparing to invest in a series of joint ventures in Japan, China and Taiwan, at a cost of about £10m. But he added that the company would hand back the money to its shareholders if it could not find suitable targets.

He was speaking as Aegis reported an 11 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £50.6m for the year to December, on turnover up by 13 per cent to £41.3bn.

The figures, which lifted Aegis shares 2.5p to 123p, prompted analysts to edge up their profit forecasts to £50.5m.

Mr Davis said he expected the global advertising market to grow by 4.5 per cent this year. Meanwhile, the explosion of digital television and the Internet would continue to drive up demand for Aegis's value-added research services, helping the company to lift its gross margins.

Freight slowdown buffets Ocean

By ANDREW VERITY

pick-up in volumes in the second half of the year," Mr Allan said.

Unlike rival freight companies - typically restricted to one part of the globe - Ocean has succeeded in marketing its services to 99 per cent of the world's economies, allowing it to give multinationals a single port of call for freight services.

After a strong run in the past two weeks, the shares came off 38p to close at 80p, in spite of a 13 per cent jump in profits achieved through careful control of margins.

John Allan, chief executive, said the group had been hit by the strength of sterling and continuing weakening of export markets in the developing world and South-east Asia.

"Export volumes have weakened in markets that are significant for us, including the UK. But we do anticipate some

able buying muscle when it purchases space from airlines.

With Asian airlines desperate to sell their capacity, this has allowed Ocean to bargain down

John Allan: Expects the second half to pick up FT

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Care is taken to ensure that the information provided by Bloomberg and Financial Express for the indexations is correct, but neither warrant, represent or guarantee the contents of the information, nor do they accept any responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions or any inconsistency. Rates

European Cup quarter
Greatne
has a la
flowerin
in Bagg

Lack of rain

Gyllene misses Cheltenham

FROM HERE on in punters do not really want to pick up the papers. They would close down the National Grid to cut off televisions and radios as well, because from this point there can be only bad news about horses and fancies for the Cheltenham Festival.

The trials, the main work, have been completed and now there is the dodging, trainers trying to sidestep the bacteria that can visit their stables, the stones that can be found by a galloping hoof. The ante-post vouchers are all clenched between crossed fingers.

A first notable absentee emerged yesterday when Lord Gyllene, the winner of the postponed 1997 Grand National, was reported to have met with a setback and will not now be among the players who congregate to entertain us at the foot of Cleeve Hill.

Lord Gyllene would probably not have won at the Festival, but his presence would certainly have enhanced the occasion. Few horses have ever made the Aintree fences look so insignificant, but the 11-year-old will now recuperate rather than participate as he attempts to win back his crown.

"During routine work over the weekend Lord Gyllene pulled a muscle behind the saddle and so will only be walking for the next 10 days," Steve Brookshaw, the gelding's trainer, said yesterday. "Therefore he will not be going to Cheltenham. We noticed it after he had worked and the vet said we shouldn't have anyone on his back for the next 10 days. We will look for another race before the Grand National, possibly over hurdles."

The injury to Earthmover is seriously damaged pride following his pale effort behind Young Kenny in the Greens

BY RICHARD EDMONDSON

Grand National Trial at Haydock on Saturday. The eight-year-old comfortably beat off the challenge of one of his co-favourites, Island Chief, but that was the only one of the 11 finishers behind him. That was not good enough from last season's Finshiders' Chase winner who went into the contest as a wild card for the Gold Cup itself. The Blue Riband is beginning to look a forlorn objective.

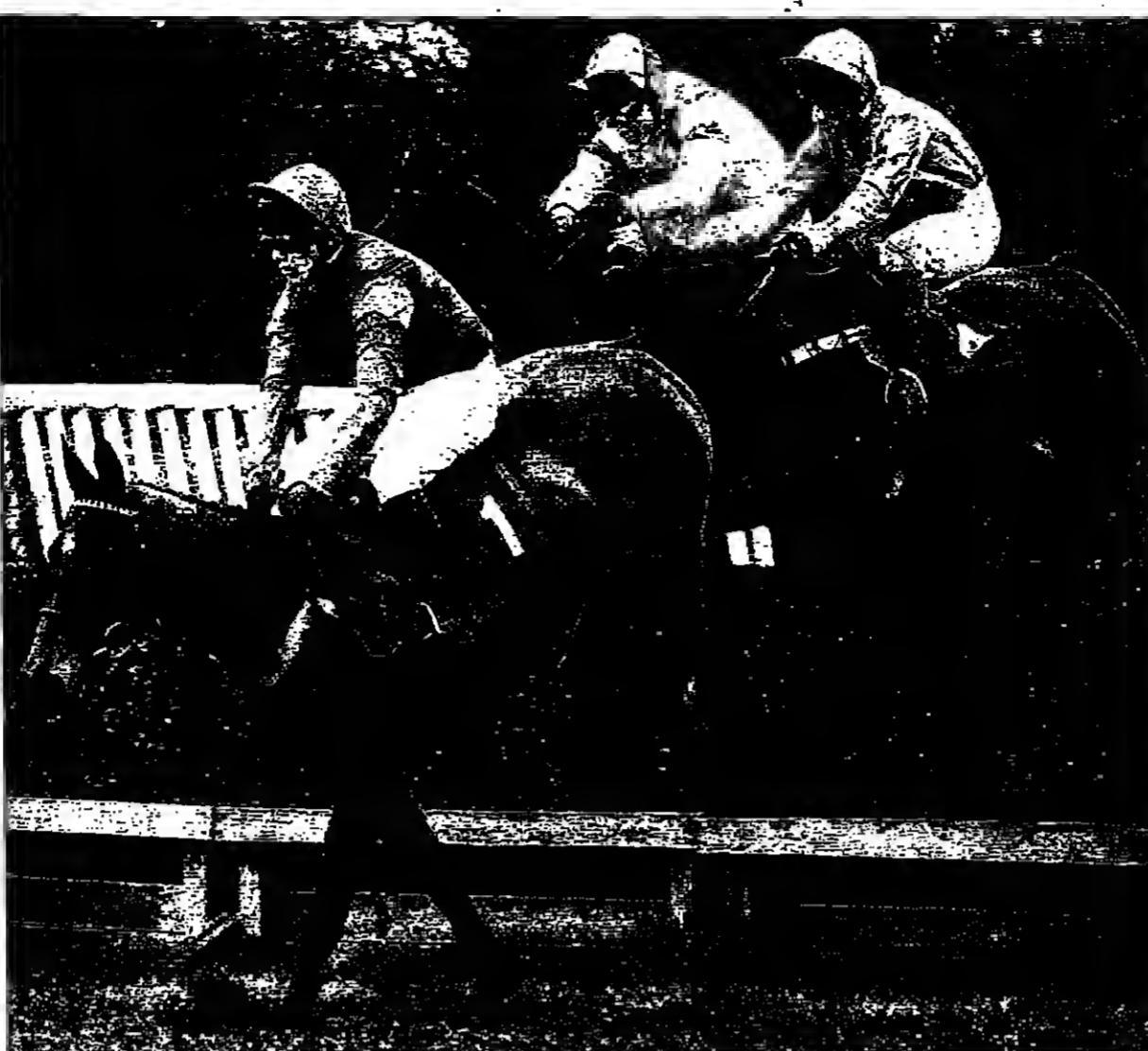
Paul Nicholls may have persistently been anticipating some sort of physical affliction to explain Earthmover's effort in Lancashire, but the horse has been in hearty form since the weekend. While a stable lass has been liberating the gelding from behind a door, Nicholls has

RICHARD EDMONDSON
Naps: Eskybrook
(Leicester 2.20)
NBS: Northern Saddler
(Leicester 4.30)

been affecting a similar action with the drawing board.

"He's fine after Saturday," the Ditchling trainer reported yesterday. "We don't know what we are going to do with him yet, but he would appreciate better ground. I will sort it out with the owner and discuss what to do, at the moment plans are fluid."

The Champion Hurdle looks likely to go ahead without any input from Deep Water, a convincing winner of the Glentifel Anniversary Hurdle at Liverpool last year. Micky Hammond's runner is more likely to show his mettle in the Scottish Champion Hurdle at Ayr next month. "I just felt that to have gone to Cheltenham the yard would have to be zinged, but we've had not the right preparation and there is always next



Emerald Statement (Barry Fenton) leads on his way to victory at Plumpton yesterday Julian Herbert/Allsport

year," the trainer said. "I think he will take his chance in the Scottish Champion Hurdle and he won't necessarily have a race before. He won first time out last season and is not a difficult horse to get ready."

Lord Lamb, Mary Revelley's talented hurdler, will next be

seen on Merseyside, though he will take the oblique route of a spin on the Flat before he goes to Aintree. The grey had originally been steered towards easy pickings at Kelso on Friday, but the agenda has changed after his unexpected defeat on heavy ground at New

castle recently. "He's just been turned away, but he's nearly ready to start cantering again," Revelley said. "He'll have his next run on the Flat at Doncaster and then he'll go back over hurdles at Liverpool."

The charms of the borders have also persuaded the con-

tinuer, the trainer, said.

Swing Clear: Promising first effort for new yard on chasing debut when 3rd to Boule-

val Bay (3/1) good to soft) last month. Looks sure to win a novice chase but will need to be well prepared.

Earthmover: Creating debut. Has not run since finishing 14th to (Samuel Widdershins) in 2m 11f Flat race (40/1) apiece.

Verdict: Earthmover is a horse to be reckoned with. He will need to be well prepared.

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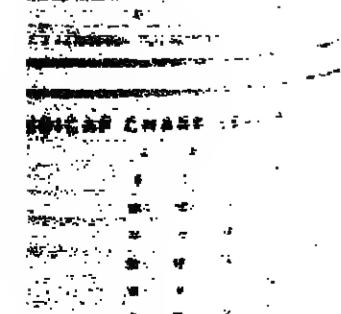
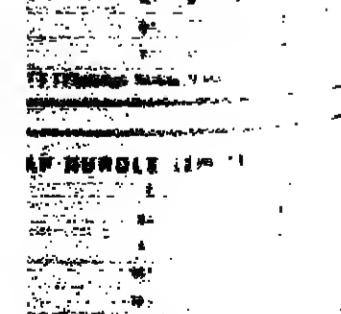
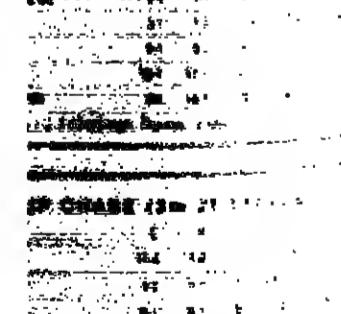
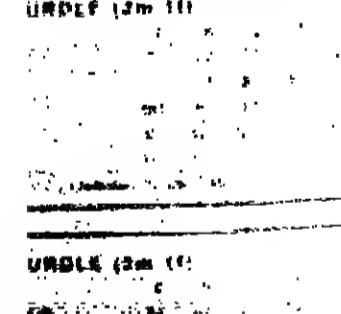
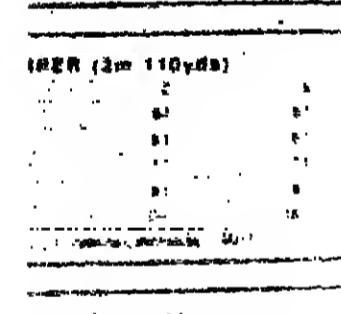
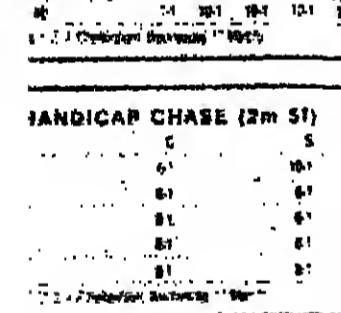
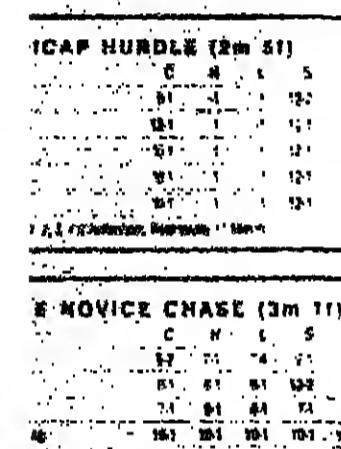
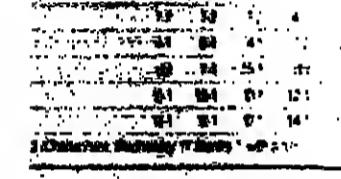
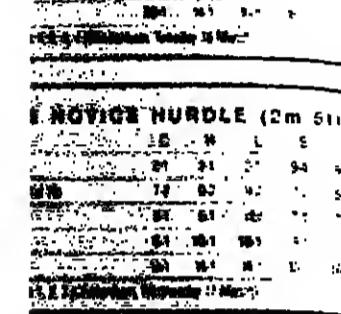
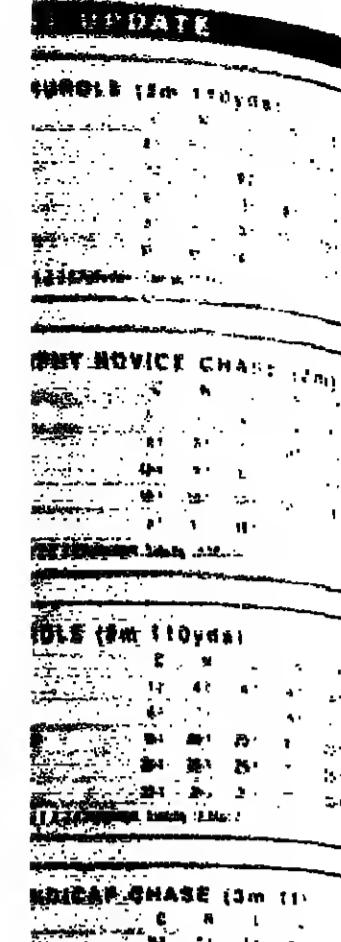
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Ten centres will dip into Lottery cash

SPORTS FUNDING

By MIKE ROWBOTTOM

THE LONG-HERALDED British Academy of Sport took its final shape yesterday as the British Academies of Sport. Although Sheffield is nominal HQ of the 10 regional centres announced by the Secretary of Culture, Media and Sport, Chris Smith and the network of facilities proposed will operate on an egalitarian basis, accessing £160m of Lottery-based funding set aside for the project.

The State Secretary denied the charge that, 14 months after deciding to site the UK Sports Institute in Sheffield, the Government and national sporting bodies had come up with a body with no head. Sheffield, he said, would have a central function in the network, providing "quality control" for the whole operation and specialising in sports science, medicine, research and administration.

It will also have a wide range of top-class sporting facilities, but in this respect it will be no different to the other named regional sites: Gateshead, Manchester, Holme Pierrepont near Nottingham, Loughborough University, Bedford, Bisham Abbey, Crystal Palace, Bath University and Southampton University.

The official guiding principle is that this is "taking service to the athletes, not the other way round". In short, the exact opposite of John Major's original vision of a brand new, super-

substantial Lottery funding for individual athletes, appears to be creating the ideal conditions for success.

Among those endorsing the new initiatives yesterday were the European 100 metres champion Darren Campbell and David Tanner, performance director for British rowing. "We wouldn't have been able to come on a trip like this before Lottery funding," Tanner said. "It has made an absolutely fantastic difference. And the new structure will make it all sustainable. We still need more facilities, but the will is there, and at last we have the money to do it."

Smith confirmed that the Government was committed to funding the new network of centres for at least 8 to 10 years, which means that the selected sites, many of which have been chosen because they already have substantial facilities, will be able to push on with their plans to upgrade and improve what they have.

The centre at Bath University will not submit plans for another £16m of Lottery funding for an indoor running track and multi-purpose sports hall, along with new synthetic pitches and tennis courts.

Steve Baddeley, chief executive of the Badminton Association of England, spoke for many organisations with his reaction to the announcement. "There's a sense of relief," he said. "This is long overdue."



South Africa's Darryl Cullinan leaves the field at Eden Park after hitting his record unbeaten 275 runs AP

Cullinan reaches milestone

CRICKET

South Africa 621-5 dec
New Zealand 205-2

DARYLL CULLINAN became South Africa's highest individual Test scorer with an unbeaten 275 out of South Africa's total of 621 for 5 declared on the third day of the first Test against New Zealand at Eden Park yesterday.

Worthy though his achievement was, the home side's batsmen confirmed the lifelessness of the pitch by reaching 205 for 5 by the close of play.

Cullinan passed the 274 scored by Graeme Pollock against Australia at Kingsmead in 1969-70 with a scurried second run of Craig McMillan's medium pace, at which point the captain, Hansie Cronje, declared.

Cullinan's innings spanned 490 deliveries and contained 27 fours and two sixes. His two records supplement two other national records he holds. He became the youngest first-class century-maker in South Africa

at the age of 16 years 304 days and then made their highest first-class score, 337, in 1995.

Just two wickets fell all day. Roger Twose being caught behind by Mark Boucher of the bowling of Allan Donald after contributing 31 to an opening stand of 80 and Nathan Astle falling in identical style after scoring a hrezy 41, which included lifting spinner Paul Adams for two sixes in an over.

The pitch, which was covered with wood glue before the match got under way to stop it breaking up, seems unlikely to deteriorate. If anything, it is becoming easier for the batsmen and Horne capitalised to

finish unbeaten, and untroubled, on 92 from 219 balls.

Third day: New Zealand won toss

SOUTH AFRICA - First Innings

D 4 Cullinan not out 275

5 Haddin not out 69

6 Horne (bat 85) 206.1 overs 621

7 Astle (bat 95) 100 overs 92

8 Boucher (bat 100) 100 overs 41

9 Cullinan not out 205

10 Astle (bat 95) 206.1 overs 305

11 Astle (bat 95) 206.1 overs 205

12 Horne (bat 95) 206.1 overs 205

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Henry's foreign policy beefs up Wales

THEY USED to grow their own in Wales. They could whistle down the nearest mineshaft for a second-row forward, back a scrum-half from the rocks around Cardiff Bay and pat themselves on the back as another genius of a No 10 tumbled off the production line at the fabled outside-half factory tucked away in the valleys. Not any more, sadly. Nowadays, Red Dragonhood covers the planet like a scarlet shroud, from Treorchy to the Transvaal, from Whidbey to the Waikato.

When Graham Henry's deflated band of shop-diluted disciples head for Paris for their weekend tête-à-tête with the French, they will do so armed with a brand new pack feature-

RUGBY UNION

BY CHRIS HEWITT

ing Peter Rogers (born in Maidstone, developed in Johannesburg, employed by London Irish, but boasting a father from Trimsaran) at loose-head prop and Brett Sinkinson (once of the Whakatane Marist club in New Zealand's Bay of Plenty, latterly of the Waikato Chiefs, and now of Neath) on the open-side flank. Rogers has been a tip for Test honours since Henry's arrival in the autumn, but no one saw Sinkinson coming, despite his Welsh grandparentage.

Rogers replaces Darren Morris at the sharp end of the Welsh scrummaging effort and

it is a sign of Henry's concern at the set-piece deficiencies of his squad that he has changed the remaining two-thirds of his threesome. Garin Jenkins, the Pontypridd hard nut who now plays his trade at Swansea, returns for the lightweight Barry Williams at hooker, while Ben Evans, a second All White front-rower, takes over the tight-head duties from the injured David Young. Unlike Jenkins, who has experienced pretty much everything Test rugby has to offer except consistent success, Evans has yet to start a full international. You can almost hear Christian Califano and Sylvain Marconnet licking their lips.

Still, Henry had to do something: reverses against Scotland

and Ireland have sent the Welsh into a depression and there would have been no point in him flogging a dead horse in the august company of Raphael Ibanez and his double Grand Slam-winning Tricolores. Sinkinson, in particular, has been in blinding form of late, albeit against the half-baked opposition produced by a Welsh Premiership, and his 28-year-old flanker will at least bring some Super 12 know-how to the red-shirted equation.

Meanwhile, England recalled Victor Ubogu to their squad for this Saturday's set-to with the Irish in Dublin. Bath's Nigerian-born tight-head replaces Graham Rowntree of Leicester in an otherwise un-

changed 22-man squad - Rowntree picked up an injury during his club's weekend cup tie at Richmond - and his promotion to be 20-minute "impact substitute" on Saturday.

"I considered Will Green of Wasps for the vacant position, but I've selected Victor on the basis of his excellent club form and his experience at this level," explained Woodward. It was something of an about-face; during his brief spell at Bath before taking on the England job 18 months ago, the coach had been less than impressed by what he considered to be Ubogu's half-hearted attachment to training.

Remarkably, only three of the current England squad - Jonny Wilkinson, Neil McCarthy and Lawrence Dallaglio - will be on Loftus Road will be unavailable to them because of a match the following day.

that emphasises the extent to which the mighty have been fallen in the competition.

Yesterday's draw saw Wasps and Richmond given home advantage over Gloucester and Newcastle, respectively, and the pairings saved the Rugby Football Union a potentially sticky problem with Rob Andrew's Falcons, whose Geordie home at Kingston Park would not have met the 8,000 minimum capacity regulation.

Nothing in rugby is ever entirely straightforward, though. Wasps, scheduled to play their tie on Good Friday, are worried that Loftus Road will be unavailable to them because of a Queen's Park Rangers football match the following day.



Rogers: New Welsh prop

WALES TEAM (Five Nations' Championship v France, Paris, Saturday): G. Jenkins (Cardiff); M. Jenkins (Scarlets); M. Williams (Scarlets); S. Gibbs (Scarlets); D. James (Pontypridd); R. Woodward (Cardiff, capt); P. Rogers (London Irish); G. Sinkinson (London Irish); C. Califano (Richmond); C. Marconnet (Llanelli); C. Jenkins (Scarlets); B. Evans (Scarlets); S. Gittins (Scarlets); B. Stokes (Scarlets); S. Charnock (Scarlets); B. Shattock (Scarlets); G. Rowntree (Leeds); A. Williams (Scarlets); G. Vassell (Llanelli); C. Anthony (Scarlets); A. Lewis (Cardiff); B. Williams (Richmond).

Lloyd lauds a doubles delight

Henman and Rusedski in tandem has the British Davis Cup captain relishing their potential.

By John Roberts

FOR ONE so single-minded, David Lloyd was delighted to start the week with double vision - the sight of Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski winning their first ATP Tour title together in the Guardian Direct Cup at Battersea Park, London, with the promise of success against the United States to come in the Davis Cup tie in Birmingham at Easter.

The British pair, who did not concede a set in their four matches against regular teams, defeated the No 3 seeds, Byron Black, of Zimbabwe, and the South African Wayne Ferreira in Sunday's final, 6-3, 7-6.

Lloyd, the British captain, was contented, even though the he knew that Henman and Rusedski do not plan to make a habit of playing doubles outside the national cause.

"To be honest," Henman said, "I don't think we really have any ambitions in doubles. For us, we want to win the singles titles and we want to win Grand Slams, and I think if we were playing more and more doubles that would detract from that. Singles is what it's about."

Rusedski, defeated in Sunday's singles final by the Dutchman Richard Krajicek, 7-6, 6-7, 7-5, considers that the game has moved on since John McEnroe preached that doubles was the best form of practice for singles. "I think the Tour's a lot harder now than when McEnroe was playing," Rusedski said. "In singles you could win maybe one or two rounds without having to exert yourself as much, whereas in the game nowadays in singles, if you're not sharp the first day you're out of the tournament."

The encouraging part is that Henman and Rusedski are prepared to play doubles in the Davis Cup, even if it means having to contest three five-set matches on consecutive days.

"I think it's good," Rusedski said, "because having that day off in between sometimes can be tough if I lose my first sin-



Britain's Tim Henman (left) and Greg Rusedski: 'We always thought they were a world-class pair,' says Lloyd. 'I wouldn't bet against them on any fast court' Allsport

gles match) unless I'm playing well. I don't think there should be a problem if we have to play three matches in a row, because it's indoors as well."

Henman agreed. "If you go to five sets in each match, you know you're capable of it," he said. "It's going to be tiring, but I'm sure we're good enough to be able to do that."

Lloyd had no doubts. "You can't ask for more than they did last week," he said. "I thought they performed on that fast court exceptionally well. Tim, from the right-hand court, got better and better as the week went on, and in the end he was reborn great. And for Greg to come out after losing a

tough, three-set singles I think mentally is very good for him. It showed a lot of character."

"I've always thought they were a world-class pair and they endorsed it. I wouldn't bet against them on any fast court to me," he said. "It's going to be tiring, but I'm sure we're good enough to be able to do that."

Henman had no doubts. "You've got a guy at the net with a pair of the quickest hands in the game, and he loves volleying. I'm really pleased for them, and I've got the two coaches [David Felgate and Sven Groeneveld] for making my life very much easier. I wanted Tim and Greg to play

together, and I was able to pick up the phone and ask. It's helped the players, too. They know we're all singing from the same hymn sheet. With the Davis Cup and the World Team Championship events coming up I think we've got a really good team spirit. On the court they were talking and laising. It's a 'biggy' sign, and I could be happier."

As Henman said: "We knew we had the ingredients to be a good pair, but I think we were pleasantly surprised in the way we played. We improved a lot during the week. I thought the first match, against [Kevin] Ullyett and [Piet] Norval, was like we were playing singles out there. We were serving and vol-

leying and just playing court to court, and the guy at the net wasn't really doing a great deal. We didn't make many returns. What you saw in the final was a combination."

Rusedski complimented his partner: "I think my movement has got a lot better, because Tim's played a lot more doubles than I have, so he knows how to move better on the court."

Henman reciprocated. "I told him he was playing well, and he was up for it. And he played very well this week [with the South African Robbie Koemgi against Tim and Greg]. He remains the best option as an alternative for the doubles. He combined with Henman when Britain lost the doubles on the way to securing a return to the World Group against India in Nottingham last September."

"Neil's been terrific," Lloyd said. "When I told him on the morning of the doubles in Ukraine [that he wasn't playing], he was terrific about it. He's a great team man. He knows that if everything's right and Tim and Greg are both fit, they're going to play. He knew that against India, but as soon

as I told him he was playing, he was up for it. And he played very well this week [with the South African Robbie Koemgi against Tim and Greg]. He knows the score and he's a terrific team man. Those three pick themselves."

"The hardest bit is who else do you pick. It isn't easy, believe me. I suppose you've got to look at the worst and think one of them might get injured, or they have a long match and not be up for the next two days."

But Lloyd is not one to dwell on negative thoughts. "I'd rather be British than American," he trilled, laughing while adding, "but that's tongue-in-cheek." No point in over-playing the air of confidence.

Wigan call up rookie hooker

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

WIGAN ARE preparing to give their 17-year-old hooker, Mark Smith, his first taste of first-team rugby in the opening game of the Super League season. Smith, last season's Academy player of the year at Wigan, is set to be called into the starting line-up in place of Mick Cassidy for the match against Hull on Friday night.

Their other potential hooker, Mark Reber, is ceded at scrum-half to cover for the continuing absence of Tony Smith. Wigan's need to strengthen their squad has seen them extend their interest to St Helens' reserve stand-off, Scott Barrow, as well as his team-mate, Paul Davidson.

The London Broncos have completed their squad for this season by signing the 24-year-old full prop, Nathan Sologinkin, from the Canberra Raiders. Wakefield Trinity's morale for the coming season has been boosted by a signing of a different sort. The supermarket giant, Sainsbury, has agreed a sponsorship deal with the newly promoted club worth £600,000 over two years.

The Lincoln Financial Group has agreed to extend its sponsorship of the Great Britain team to cover this autumn's Tri-Series against Australia and New Zealand. Lincoln, which sponsored the Test series against the Kiwis last year, is also to provide backing for Britain's senior referees this season.

The League's director of referees, Greg McCalum, is to issue a stern warning to coaches at a meeting next Monday that the sort of persistent ying-on the tactic that marred the Challenge Cup tie between Leeds and St Helens on Saturday will not be tolerated. McCalum was furious with the infringements that prevented the match from achieving any fluency.

Hollow win for Cardiff

ICE HOCKEY

CARDIFF BEARS overcame Manchester Storm 2-1 in front of a capacity arena in south Wales on Sunday night - but the home victory was a hollow one, with Storm having pipped them to the Sekonda Superleague title the previous day.

The hosts had to win the hard way, coming from behind after Mike Morin had given Storm the lead in the second period. But in the final session the Devils scored twice in a little more than two minutes with a short-handed goal from Kip Noble and the game winner from Martin Lindman four minutes from the end.

Bracknell Bees, determined to hang on to fourth position, cruised to a 5-1 home victory over Nottingham Panthers, with last season's Superleague champions, Ayr Scottish Eagles, slumping to a 3-2 away defeat at Newcastle Riverkings.

Sheffield Steelers' run of four successive victories was halted when their weakened side was held to a 2-2 draw after overtime at the bottom club, London Knights.

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La Costa too cosy for matchplay

GOLF

BY ANDY FARRELL
in Carlsbad, California

ceived, to go along with the Walter Hagen Cup, and boost the earnings of professional golfers in comparison with others in American sports. Duval's record \$2.6m from the US tour last year was still less than the average salary in the NBA.

If it all sounds like a sum total, it's not. Woods, a 23-year-old, has actually upped the fact that television has still not come to terms with matchplay golf.

In the past, TV hated the head-to-head format because matches might not reach their fixed camera positions at the closing holes. Now, in the days of roving cameras covering all 18 holes and the positive image events like the Ryder Cup have given matchplay the problem is fixed schedules.

It is the custom in the States for the midweek rounds to be hidden away on cable channels and for the national networks to grab the drama at the week-

end. This works fine for regular strokeplay tournaments where the early action is largely forgettable but this week every shot mattered from the moment Nick Price teed off against Frankie Munoz on Wednesday morning.

The drama came thick and fast on the opening few days. That it did not last was disappointing - although Maggert secured his biggest pay-day by dramatically chipping in at the 36th hole of the final - but should not doom the event in its infancy. New characters such as Japan's Shigeki Maruyama, Sweden's Patrik Sjoland and the Argentinian Eduardo Romero came to the fore, but Woods exceeded all expectations.

While Europe's big names were failing at La Costa, Sweden's Gabriel Hjertstedt won the Tucson Open in Arizona. The 27-year-old landed a 25-foot birdie putt on the first play-off hole to beat America's Tommy Armour and qualifies for a place in the Masters at Augusta in April.

ANDERSEN CONSULTING WORLD MATCHPLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (La Costa, California, all players: USA): J. Maggert 64-66-67-68=265; G. Maggert 67-68-69-68=262. Third place: J. Huston 67-68-69-68=264; J. Huston bt S. Price 5 and 4.



Jeff Maggert celebrates after chipping in for victory AFP

Houllier seeks FA hearing

GERARD HOULLIER has requested a personal hearing to defend himself against a misconduct charge laid by the Football Association.

The Liverpool manager was shocked to discover that, 17 days after his criticism of the Birmingham referee Mike Reed, it has been decided to bring him before Lancaster Gate's disciplinary bosses. The reason for the delay is that the FA's "sleaze buster", Graham Bean, has been on holiday.

Reed, who sent off Jamie Carragher at Charlton to spark Houllier's outburst, did not

FOOTBALL

BY ALAN NIXON

complain to the FA about Houllier's comments. Instead he left it in Bean's hands by sending him newspaper cuttings and a covering letter asking for the FA's observations. That has eventually meant that what Houllier said was considered serious enough to charge him.

Coventry's chairman, Bryan Richardson, has been fined £500

and warned about his conduct after commenting about the referee after his team's game against Hartlepool on 12 December. Derby's Argentinian defender, Horacio Carbonari, has been given a £1,000 and a suspended one-match ban as a result of a misconduct charge for crowd incitement after scoring against Nottingham Forest in a 2-2 draw in November.

Liverpool and Kenny Dalglish's consortium, which

includes the rock musician Jim Kerr, have distanced themselves from speculation linking the former Kop idol with an Anfield takeover. A Liverpool statement read: "Liverpool FC has had no approaches from anyone wanting to buy the club."

Aston Villa's manager, John Gregory, was also busy countering rumours. He dismissed reports linking him with a move to Atletico Madrid as Arrigo Sacchi's replacement as "pure speculation".

Similarly, Tottenham have dismissed reports linking their captain, Sol Campbell, with a

multi-million pound move to Real Madrid.

Campbell yesterday had his court case for the alleged assault of a steward at Derby's Pride Park adjourned until 30 March. The case will be heard by Derby magistrates after Tottenham's Worthington Cup final against Leicester and three days after England's European Championship qualifying match against Poland.

The problems at Crystal Palace are mounting. Their intended fund-raising sale of Lee Bradbury to Birmingham City has been called off, because

Palace have not yet paid Manchester City for him. Bradbury joined Palace five months ago in a deal worth £1.2m up front and the rest based on appearances. However, City are still waiting for the money.

John Gorman, Glenn Hoddle's assistant when he was England's coach, has succeeded his fellow Scot Stewart Houston as first team coach at Ipswich Town. Houston joined Tottenham after Saturday's match at Bristol City, linking up again with George Graham, with whom he had a successful partnership at Arsenal.

Tense race promised by familiar mix

ROWING

BY HUGH MATHESON

until 1993, have tried to break back with steady better crews for the past three years only to find Cambridge going even faster. Last year both crews shattered the previous record. Since then Cambridge have lost several key athletes, including Alex Story, who came to the crew late but was a crucial influence.

The Light Blue president, Crombie, can still rely on the winning experience of Graham Smith who still only 23, first won a junior world gold in 1991, and on Toby Wallace, who has a shorter pedigree but at 26 has the better levers.

As Robin Williams, their coach, said: "I feel we need to plan the race tactically. We should spread the experience through the boat and give the right backing to those who have not done it before. We will need the right mind in the right seat regardless of how well they row or how strong they are."

At Oxford one of the most experienced, James Roycroft, has lost his seat to a man who rowed in the winning reserve crew last year.

There are three surviving Blues, last year's president Andrew Lindsay, the Swiss Nilssson and the president this time, Charlie Humphreys. Sean Bowden, the Dark Blue coach, for the last two races says: "They are not afraid in plain strength but I think the racing temperament is right. They are more up for it."

BOAT RACE CREWS

CAMBRIDGE

OXFORD

T H Ayer (US, Worcester) 24, 6ft 5in, 8st 9lb
B Moore (Milbay, Can, and Sir Anne's) 22, 6ft 2in, 14st 11lb
M Mc Crotty (US, Kobe) 23, 6ft 5in, 14st 12lb
C von Erklinghausen (Gen, Kebel) 27, 6ft 5in, 14st 21lb
C & P C. Smith (president) (Hampton School and Oriel College) 22, 6ft 5in, 13st 11lb
A J R Lindsay (Eton and Brasenose) 22, 6ft 1in, 14st 3lb
L A M. Smith (US, Lund, Sue, and Hertford) 30, 6ft 3.25in, 14st 11lb
D R Snow (St Paul's and Balliol) 20, 6ft 5in, 13st 9lb
W Sharpe (cox) (Clare) 23, 5ft 9in, 8st 8lb

TOMORROW

Former Formula One world champion

Damon Hill takes

Brian Viner on a circuit of Bill Gates, Lear jets, body heat and why grand prix racing is like boxing

French clubs vie for Uefa advance

FRENCH CLUBS will tonight try to make up for the country's European Cup failure this season by securing three of the fourth berths in the Uefa Cup semi-finals.

Marseilles, Bordeaux and Lyon, the top three in the league standings, are attempting to become the first French side to win the tournament. Marseilles are at home to Celta Vigo, Bordeaux entertain Parma and Lyon travel to Bologna in a quarter-final line-up comprising only French, Italian and Spanish clubs. The Italians could also claim three semi-final places, with Roma playing Atletico Madrid away in tonight's first leg.

Bordeaux, who eliminated Milan on their way to the 1996 final, face arguably the toughest task against the favourites Parma, winners in 1995 and currently second in Serie A despite being hit by injuries and suspensions in their recent games.

Parma's French World Cup midfielder, Alain Boghossian, is out but Dino Baggio, having recovered from a foot injury, should return along with the Argentinian playmaker Juan Veron, who has been suspended. Celta Vigo are arguably Spain's best hope of a place in the last four: Atletico, under their new coach, Carlos Aguirre, face a Roma side who played brilliantly in Saturday's 1-0 Serie A defeat of Milan.

Bordeaux have had a remarkable run all the way from the InterToto Cup, but their morale has been hit by a 5-0 thrashing by Fiorentina at the weekend. They welcome back striker Giuseppe Signori from suspension.

Lyon, 1-0 winners at Paris St-Germain last week, are without their suspended Swiss striker, Marco Grassi.



On the horns of a dilemma: Supporters and stewards of FC Zurich attempt to catch a bull in the stands of the club's Letzigrund stadium before the Swiss premier league match against St Gallen on Sunday. The bull had been bought by fans as a mascot after it was threatened with an appointment at the local abattoir, but it broke free from its minder and climbed into the stands before the game could start AFP

Boavista ready to constrict 'big three'

PORTUGAL

THE RACE for the Portuguese title could go all the way to the final day, and for the first time in 53 years, a club outside the "big three" may lift the trophy.

At this stage last season, Porto held a commanding nine-point lead over Benfica and they maintained that gap as they cruised to their fourth successive league triumph. With just 10 games to go in the current campaign, Porto are again setting the pace, but Benfica and the outsiders Boavista are the only club outside that trio to win the title

tense 0-0 draw in the derby between Boavista and Porto on Sunday to close on the leaders. Graeme Souness's side travelled across Lisbon to Alverca and came away with a 2-0 win, with the Welsh striker Dean Saunders opening the scoring.

Boavista have won the Portuguese Cup five times but have never come close to lifting the league title, which has been the exclusive preserve of the "big three" – Porto, Benfica and Sporting Lisbon – for the past 50 years. Since the league started in 1935, the only club outside that trio to win the title was Belenenses in 1946.

Benfica took advantage of

protest against penalties imposed by the Balkan country's football federation.

Burrel's 17 players halted the strike on Sunday after the federation warned them either to play their next match or suffer relegation to the Second Division. The club, who had three of their players rushed to hospital after the strike was called off, will play Apollonia Fier in Tirana today. They were banned from playing at home for four matches after gunshots rang out during a match against SK Tirana in December and two of their players kicked and punched the referee.

COLOMBIA

THE FORMER Newcastle striker, Faustino Asprilla, has been restored to the Colombian national side after his banishment from the World Cup – but he is still not a happy man. Last week he complained that he was only given economy-class tickets to fly to Italy, where he plays for Parma, to Miami, where he scored twice in last month's 3-3 draw with Germany. "To belong to the national team is to suffer," he said. The Colombian Football Federation has responded by telling him not to complain in public.

BAOMINTON

Lars Sologub, of Sweden, has been named as the coach of the British team which will be competing in the next year's Sydney Olympics.

BASKETBALL

WORLDBOXING LEAGUE Chester Jers 76 Newcastle Eagles 82

1998 WORLDBOXING LEAGUE: WORLDBOXING LEAGUE (B) Chester Jers 76 Newcastle Eagles 82

1998 WORLDBOXING LEAGUE (C) Chester Jers 76 Newcastle Eagles 82

1998 WORLDBOXING LEAGUE (D) Chester Jers 76 Newcastle Eagles 82

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1998 WORLDBOXING LEAGUE (Z) Chester Jers 76 Newcastle Eagles 82

FOOTBALL

Berti Vogts, the former German coach, has joined his old club Borussia Monchengladbach, the Bundesliga's bottom club, as a director.

Northern Ireland will play France, the world champions, in a friendly

on Saturday, 20 March, at the Ulster Hall in Belfast. The game will be the 10th in a row to be played at the Ulster Hall.

Wales will play Scotland on

Wednesday, 24 March, at the Ulster Hall.

England will play Northern Ireland on Saturday, 27 March.

WALSH LEAGUE: Picture changes: Mon 28 Apr; Bradford City (I) 24 Apr; Chesterfield (I) 25 Apr; Wrexham (I) 26 Apr; Woking (I) 27 Apr; Weymouth (I) 28 Apr; Wokingham (I) 29 Apr; Wokingham (I) 30 Apr; Wokingham (I) 31 Apr; Wokingham (I) 1 May; Wokingham (I) 2 May; Wokingham (I) 3 May; Wokingham (I) 4 May; Wokingham (I) 5 May; Wokingham (I) 6 May; Wokingham (I) 7 May; Wokingham (I) 8 May; Wokingham (I) 9 May; Wokingham (I) 10 May; Wokingham (I) 11 May; Wokingham (I) 12 May; Wokingham (I) 13 May; Wokingham (I) 14 May; Wokingham (I) 15 May; Wokingham (I) 16 May; Wokingham (I) 17 May; Wokingham (I) 18 May; Wokingham (I) 19 May; Wokingham (I) 20 May; Wokingham (I) 21 May; Wokingham (I) 22 May; Wokingham (I) 23 May; Wokingham (I) 24 May; Wokingham (I) 25 May; Wokingham (I) 26 May; Wokingham (I) 27 May; Wokingham (I) 28 May; Wokingham (I) 29 May; Wokingham (I) 30 May; Wokingham (I) 31 May; Wokingham (I) 1 June; Wokingham (I) 2 June; Wokingham (I) 3 June; Wokingham (I) 4 June; Wokingham (I) 5 June; Wokingham (I) 6 June; Wokingham (I) 7 June; Wokingham (I) 8 June; Wokingham (I) 9 June; Wokingham (I) 10 June; Wokingham (I) 11 June; Wokingham (I) 12 June; Wokingham (I) 13 June; Wokingham (I) 14 June; Wokingham (I) 15 June; Wokingham (I) 16 June; Wokingham (I) 17 June; Wokingham (I) 18 June; Wokingham (I) 19 June; Wokingham (I) 20 June; Wokingham (I) 21 June; Wokingham (I) 22 June; Wokingham (I) 23 June; Wokingham (I) 24 June; Wokingham (I) 25 June; Wokingham (I) 26 June; Wokingham (I) 27 June; Wokingham (I) 28 June; Wokingham (I) 29 June; Wokingham (I) 30 June; Wokingham (I) 31 June; Wokingham (I) 1 July; Wokingham (I) 2 July; Wokingham (I) 3 July; Wokingham (I) 4 July; Wokingham (I) 5 July; Wokingham (I) 6 July; Wokingham (I) 7 July; Wokingham (I) 8 July; Wokingham (I) 9 July; Wokingham (I) 10 July; Wokingham (I) 11 July; Wokingham (I) 12 July; Wokingham (I) 13 July; Wokingham (I) 14 July; Wokingham (I) 15 July; Wokingham (I) 16 July; Wokingham (I) 17 July; Wokingham (I) 18 July; Wokingham (I) 19 July; Wokingham (I) 20 July; Wokingham (I) 21 July; Wokingham (I) 22 July; Wokingham (I) 23 July; Wokingham (I) 24 July; Wokingham (I) 25 July; Wokingham (I) 26 July; Wokingham (I) 27 July; Wokingham (I) 28 July; Wokingham (I) 29 July; Wokingham (I) 30 July; Wokingham (I) 31 July; Wokingham (I) 1 August; Wokingham (I) 2 August; Wokingham (I) 3 August; Wokingham (I) 4 August; Wokingham (I) 5 August; Wokingham (I) 6 August; Wokingham (I) 7 August; Wokingham (I) 8 August; Wokingham (I) 9 August; Wokingham (I) 10 August; Wokingham (I) 11 August; Wokingham (I) 12 August; Wokingham (I) 13 August; Wokingham (I) 14 August; Wokingham (I) 15 August; Wokingham (I) 16 August; Wokingham (I) 17 August; Wokingham (I) 18 August; Wokingham (I) 19 August; Wokingham (I) 20 August; Wokingham (I) 21 August; Wokingham (I) 22 August; Wokingham (I) 23 August; Wokingham (I) 24 August; Wokingham (I) 25 August; Wokingham (I) 26 August; Wokingham (I) 27 August; Wokingham (I) 28 August; Wokingham (I) 29 August; Wokingham (I) 30 August; W



SPORT

THE PEARL OF INTER P21 • BRITAIN'S DOUBLES DREAM TEAM P24



England wait on 'infirm four'

CRICKET

ENGLAND UNVEILED their World Cup squad at Lord's yesterday, before revealing that four of the players chosen - Michael Atherton, Graham Thorpe, Neil Fairbrother and Ian Austin - have two weeks to pass a series of fitness tests. In contrast, Australia, one of the tournament favourites, have left out two of their fittest players, Greg Blewett and Michael Slater, who are playing some of the best cricket of their careers.

Apart from the haste with which the 'infirm four' have to prove their fitness, there were few surprises, and 10 of those involved in the recent one-day series in Australia were included. Inevitably, with such a prestigious event as the World Cup, there were disappointments as well, and Nasser Hussain, one of England's leading scorers in that series, was left out.

It was, according to the chairman of selectors, David Graveney, one of several tough decisions in shaping a squad that apparently took until Sunday to ratify.

If many will see Hussain's absence as a glaring omission, the presence of the 21-year-old Andrew Flintoff was a positive factor. Having lost a good deal of weight at the end of the season, Flintoff caught the selector's eye just at the right time and his explosive batting performances on the A tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa have roused interest.

One thing irks, however, and considering that the four under review - Fairbrother (recurring hamstring trouble), Austin (recent knee operation), Thorpe and Atherton (both dodgy backs) - are the selectors' first choice, the insistence on a 15 March deadline appears ungenerous. The tournament in Sharjah in early April may be a good place to make final preparations, but the conditions are so different as to make the drawing of any worthwhile conclusions minimal.

According to Graveney, the stringent deadline is to avoid the issue being fudged further down the line. "They will be tested by Wayne Morton, the England physio, over a period of days. If there are any doubts they won't be included," he said. But while one can see his point, that they have until 2 May to make any final changes, as well as the right to replace a player at any time, makes the haste seem indecent.

For Atherton, the period may prove insufficient anyway. This



At Lord's yesterday David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, reveals the names of the 15 England players who hope to lift cricket's World Cup trophy in June. *Allsport*

week he undergoes work on a troublesome facet joint in his lower back. According to Morton, the severity of Atherton's symptoms outweigh the pathology that causes them: that is, a small problem is causing a large amount of inconvenience, which is what forced him to miss the final Test in Sydney.

By his own admission, Atherton, who has played just a single one-day international in the past year, feels he is in the squad as an option rather than a certainty. This is not the case with either Thorpe or Fairbrother, both of whom would be first choice to occupy the middle-order. Indeed, a thumbs-up from Atherton for the first game on 15 May would significantly improve England's chances of making the final.

cortisone jabs he has received in recent times. Even so, expecting Atherton to gambol around like a spring lamb in a fortnight's time - remember, run-saving in the field will be just as important as run-scoring with the bat - may be asking for a bit too much of him.

The process, which involves nothing more intrusive than an injection, blocks off the pain signals transmitted by the nerve which causes the back muscles to go into protective spasms. This, apparently, is a different problem to the chronic spondylosis he has somehow coped with most of his career.

If it sounds gruesome, Atherton is hopeful that it will bring an end to the myriad

As hosts, England will have great hopes of winning the trophy for the first time. The biggest obstacle, though, will be getting past their group stage, which includes India, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Kenya, from which three teams qualify.

However, the early season conditions - the first match, England v Sri Lanka, is at Lord's on 14 May - should favour Alec Stewart's side, which is probably why the selectors have included Angus Fraser as well as gambling on the likes of Atherton and Austin, who both have exceptional one-day records in England.

The announcement of a 15-man squad comes a month early - 31 March is the deadline for final squads, which is why other countries have named 19 players in their selections.

With no more cricket before the cut-off date, the selectors felt that further prevarication was futile. In two weeks' time we should know.

AUSTRALIA Preliminary World Cup squad: S R Waugh (capt), S M Pollock, G Kistner, H Gibbs, J H Kallis, O J Coulthard, D G Bresnan, J D Rutherford, M V Boucher, A A Donald, A C Davison, S Elworthy, O M Benkenstein, O N Crookes, P L Symcox, N Potros, P R Adams, M Neal.

SOUTH AFRICA Preliminary World Cup squad: W J Cronje (capt), S M Pollock, G Kistner, H Gibbs, J H Kallis, O J Coulthard, D G Bresnan, J D Rutherford, M V Boucher, A A Donald, A C Davison, S Elworthy, O M Benkenstein, O N Crookes, P L Symcox, N Potros, P R Adams, M Neal.

A Plinoff (Lancs) has yet to make one-day debut. * denotes not due

ENGLAND SQUAD AVERAGES

BATTING: ONE-DAY INTERNATIONALS					
Matches	1	No. Runs	HS 100	50	Avg
N V Kallich (Warwickshire)	40	44	1498	121*	33
G P Thorpe (Surrey)	44	44	1482	89	14
G A Hick (Worcester)	87	86	2990	125*	35
M J Atherton (Lancs)	50	50	2200	115	45
A J Stewart (Surrey, capt)	116	111	3211	116	27
V J Wells (Leics)	7	5	0	131	39
A J Halliday (Surrey)	31	29	6	573	83
P J Hirst (Warwickshire)	22	22	500	0	24.04
R D B Croft (Gloucestershire)	40	20	11	374	32
I O Austin (Lancs)	4	3	1	29	11
A R C Pinner (Middlesex)	37	16	7	122	38
D G Gooch (Warwickshire)	37	31	13	222	30
A D Mistry (Lancs)	22	9	2	42	6.00

BOWLING: ONE-DAY INTERNATIONALS					
Matches	1	No. Runs	Wkts	BB	Avg
V J Wells	32	153	6	0	32.00
D Gooch	519.2	43	2203	89	5.42
A D Mistry	194.3	21	772	28	4.18
A R C Pinner	194.3	21	772	28	4.18
M J Atherton	348.4	50	1245	42	4.22
D G Gooch	351.0	21	1304	40	4.00
G P Thorpe	20.0	1	74	1	35.51
I O Austin	37.3	1	179	3	0.0
N V Kallich	1.0	0	9	0	0.0

* denotes not due

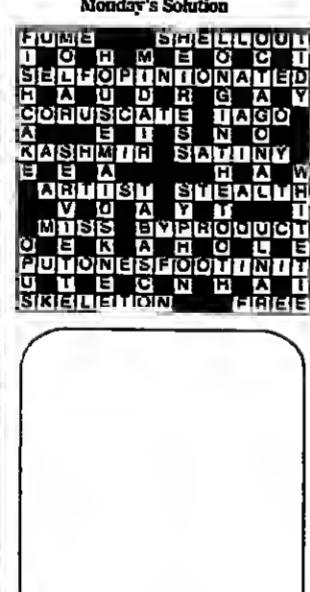
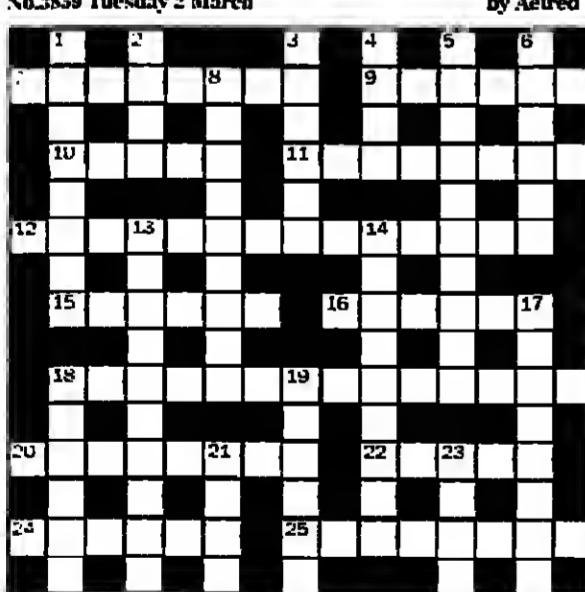
Cullinan's record.
Under-19s' sick day, page 23

THE TUESDAY CROSSWORD

No.2859 Tuesday 2 March

by Astred

Munday's Solution



ACROSS

- Intrude gradually; having enclosed fish (8)
- Male bias suggested in this book? (6)
- Daggers partly revealed by strobe lights (5)
- Wine: the lot is knocked back by trainer; soldier (8)
- Capital on changes to include one acquiring in-depth knowledge (14)
- Formerly concerning listener from abroad (6)
- Good answer adopted by Denmark's port (6)
- Frenetic activity behind space on top storey; we hear; leads to complaint (9,5)
- One good saint possibly taking in university? (6)

DOWN

- A French item split? (8)
- Support English and Scottish bank (4)
- Figures house doctor will be found in Rhode Island (6)
- They have some resistance to official letters (4)
- Annoyance at mince pie's crumbling (10)
- How from whalebone you might get this? (6)

Celtic win Farry fight

FOOTBALL
BY DAVID MCKINNEY

part played by Farry. "It has taken Celtic and its supporters three years to receive justice on the issue of the SFA's chief executive Jim Farry's failure to properly register Jorge Cadete."

"It is deplorable that a prominent member club should be disadvantaged in this way when on several occasions the SFA's chief executive had the opportunity to make the correct decision. Mr Farry's failure to properly and timely register Jorge Cadete leaves the club in no other position than to ask for the office bearers of the SFA to recognise that Mr Farry's po-

sition is untenable. This case demonstrates clearly that Mr Farry cannot be allowed to hold and exercise such power.

The issue recently went to arbitration with the SFA admitting liability before proceedings could finish.

Clearly angered by the whole situation, Celtic are demanding the dismissal of Farry, who has held the top job at the SFA since 1990 following 10 years as secretary of the Scottish League.

In the last nine years he has been frequently criticised for his dictatorial attitude which at times appeared out of tune with the ordinary supporter.

He insisted on Scotland playing a European Championship

qualifier on the day of the funeral of Princess Diana only to back down in the face of severe pressure and criticism.

Farry's motives for delaying the Cadete transfer remain unclear and although Celtic supporters will interpret his actions as indicating a pro-Rangers stance McCann refused to be drawn on the topic.

"I'm not claiming there was malice but there was intent. There was a failure on his part despite the advice of Fifa and Celtic."

This is a matter that goes beyond Celtic Football Club, it's a question of somebody who has failed to follow the rules of football."

McCann intends to hold discussions with the other clubs in



Farry: Suspended

the Scottish Premier League and his frustration with the powerbrokers at the SFA could prove the motive towards a shift of power towards the new body who would effectively run the elite body of Scottish football. In the meantime Farry has agreed to co-operate with an SFA investigation into his actions.

SO ALEX FERGUSON will not, after all, have the world's greatest striker to worry about tomorrow night. Ronaldinho himself put an end to the possibility that he would appear in the first leg of the European Cup quarter-final at Old Trafford when he announced last night that he will not be on the flight carrying Internazionale's squad from Milan today for their meeting with Manchester United.

Yesterday afternoon the Brazilian went through a final session designed to test his injured knees. After coming off the practice pitch at La Pineta-

since his last appearance, at Bologna in Serie A on 17 January.

"I'm staying here to carry on training" Ronaldinho said. "So the best thing to do, so then when I come back it's not once again a question of playing one match and then having to miss the next one. Inter's fans must understand that in this situation I am the one who suffers worst."

Over Christmas, Ronaldinho went home to Brazil for an intensive course of treatment to the chronic tendinitis affecting both knees, the right in particular. But on his return he found that he was still playing through pain, and the decision was taken to try and get him fit once and for all. Last week he left the gym and returned to training sessions with his teammates, in the hope that he

would at least be able to take a seat on the substitutes' bench at Old Trafford.

"Ronaldinho doesn't want to speak about a particular date for his return," Inter's spokesman, Sandro Sabatini, said. "But we'll watch his situation, and maybe he can play part of the Coppa Italia match against Parma next Tuesday, and then in the Milan derby the following Saturday." And if those matches went well, Sabatini added, he would be ready to line up against Ferguson's men in the second leg, at San Siro on 17 March.

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Comment

TU



Smear on police

Sir: The Lawrence inquiry report is a biased, politicised smear of the police. The report's incompetence over releasing names and addresses of witnesses is greater and less understandable than the police errors in their investigation of the dreadful murder.

There is no doubt that there are racists among the police; I have met one myself. This must not be tolerated. But the report showed little evidence that racism – rather than simple human error – was the source of police failings in the murder investigation. It showed even less evidence of widespread racism, let alone "institutional".

There was "institutional racism" in Nazi Germany, South Africa, and the American South, but the only institutional racism – properly defined – in the British police is the racial quotas the Government is proposing to introduce. In addition to being racist, these quotas will smear successful black officers as "quota officers" who could not make it on their own.

To define as "racist" any incident that any observer, no matter how irrational or biased, considers to be racist will severely damage race relations. To suggest that privately expressed views should be prosecutable smacks of Stalinism.

The report should be put where it belongs – in the bin.

WILLIAM MACDOUGALL
Conservative Councillor
Haringey Council
London N22

Sir: The Lawrence inquiry has shown what the Conservatives have become – an opposition with no conception of its role.

They have set themselves up as a little party-political guerrilla band whose chosen sport seems to be hunting the scalps of as many ministers as they can, regardless of the underlying issue. This time, they have decided to use the error of judgement by the Lawrence inquiry team in publishing the names of police informants to add Jack Straw to their collection.

Do they think that making political capital out of what should be a bipartisan issue, the battle against racism in our public institutions, will earn them the gratitude of the victims of this error, or of the Lawrence family or of the British public? Do they imagine that they are performing a useful function in attempting to crucify a minister who had the integrity, which they lacked, to set up this inquiry, because he had the effrontery to go on a weekend break with his family?

ALAN MURRAY
Dorking, Surrey

Sir: The Conservatives' criticism of Jack Straw over the published names of informants in the Lawrence report is asinine. It implies that the Home Office should have been allowed to scrutinise, well in advance of its public appearance, an independent inquiry report and been given powers to query parts of it, and to request changes, in time for correction prior to publication. That would have rendered the label "independent" redundant. The whole idea is ludicrous.

PAUL WALTER
Newbury, Berkshire

Sir: We are all responsible for creating a society where a young man can be murdered because he is black with nothing done. It is easy to say that one is "against racism", but the fact that it even needs to be said is revealing.

Rather than conveniently pointing the finger at other people – those racists – we need to look closer to home. We must not forget that "racist gangs" are made up of people. They are not an alien force down for a day trip from Mars. They are our sons, our daughters, our mothers and fathers, our colleagues. They are a part of us and we must all bear some responsibility for their actions.

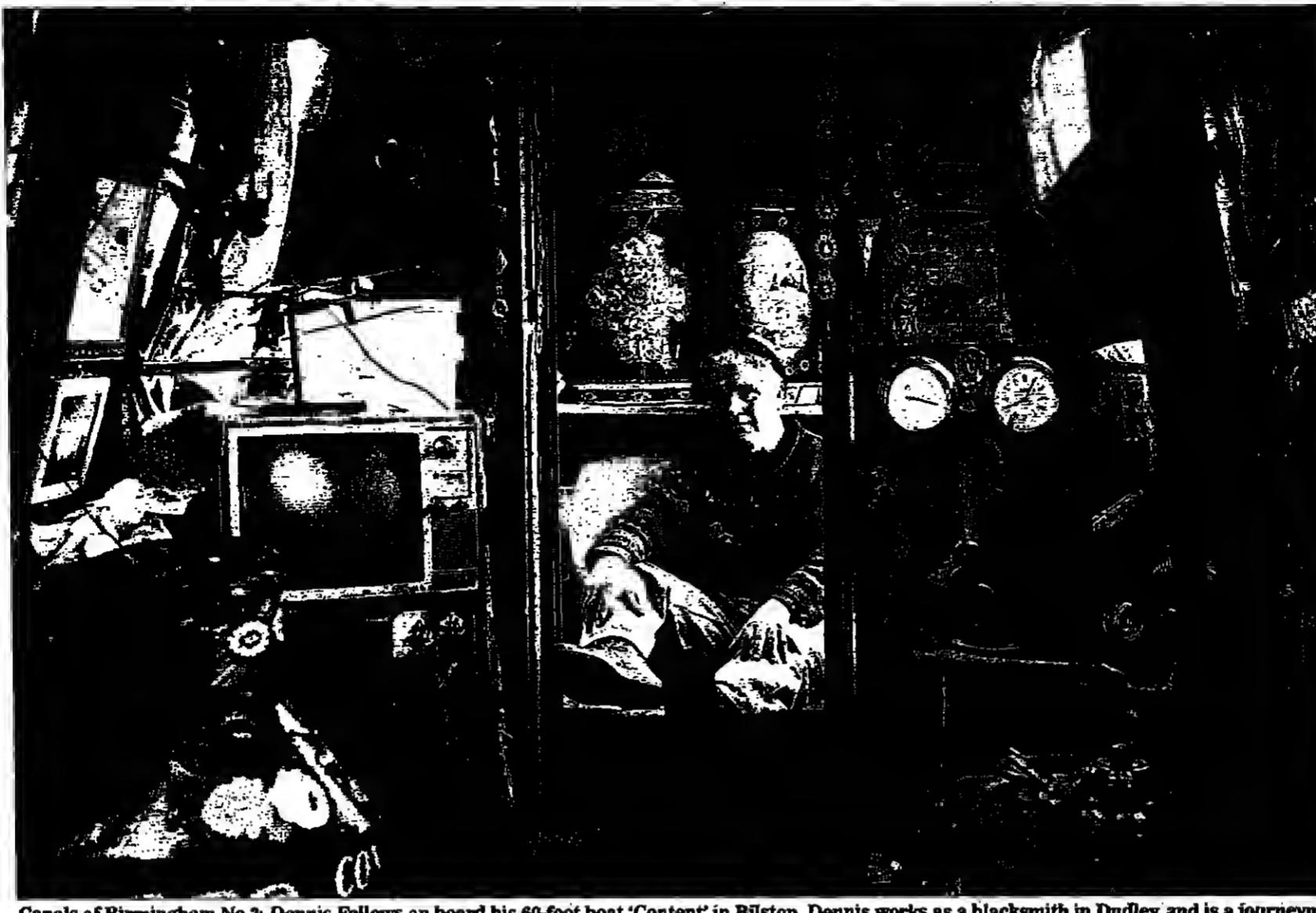
LAURA SMITH
London N6

Sir: It is claimed that the police merely reflect the views of society

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Canals of Birmingham No 2: Dennis Fellows on board his 60-foot boat 'Content' in Bilston. Dennis works as a blacksmith in Dudley, and is a journeyman of the Waterways Craft Guild

Uninformed consent

Sir: The basis upon which people give consent for the removal of their organs is that they are dead before those organs are removed. To the vast majority, death implies loss of hope for recovery of any sense of feeling as well as cessation of circulation and all brain function. From the recent correspondence it appears that these are, in fact, not the criteria used in this country.

Furthermore, it would appear from the letter from Dr Urquhart (25 February), that the dismemberment of the donor is carried out before and not after the cessation of ventilation.

The only true consent is informed consent; the majority of those carrying donor cards are not informed that they will be pink and warm and potentially sentient whilst their vital organs are being removed. Were they to be so informed then it is likely that a large number of those donor cards would follow mine into the waste bin.

To contend that consent should be assumed without an explicit and immediately available statement to the contrary is a tacit acceptance that truly informed consent would be rare indeed.

ROGER BLASSBERG

St Albans, Hertfordshire

Sir: In California, which renews driving licences every four years, one is given the option upon renewal to designate oneself as an organ donor (Letters, 1 March). This is indicated on the licence by a small pink dot sticker. In the event of an accident it is easy for an official to see that donor permission has already been given, and that the organs may be removed. Both my husband and I have pink dots on our licences.

JUDITH NELSON

London WC1

Thames in peril

Sir: It is not only Twickenham riverside which deserves celebrity support (Letter, 22 February); Kew needs it too.

For ten years we have been fighting a scheme for the Kew riverside site between the Public Record Office and the river Thames. As ever, it is almost entirely for gated "luxury" flats, in six blocks at right angles to the PRO (a brutal edifice itself) and the tow path, stepping down from six to four storeys high.

The Thames in London needs a continuous protection zone along its whole length on both sides, wide enough to encompass those few remaining undeveloped sites, which are under threat of massive over-development and appalling "architecture". The public should have the right to control whatever impacts on land in the public realm.

CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT
London W4

Age of pop classics

Sir: I get very annoyed when my teenage children accuse me of trying to be cool when I buy the latest album by, say, Rattles (Philips Hensher, 26 February). What they find so difficult to appreciate is that I do genuinely enjoy quite a lot of contemporary music. (What I find difficult is that fairly often my purchases disappear into their rooms.)

I do not remember ever being enamoured of my parents' favourite music. Jim Reeves was never my type of thing. However, I do still enjoy playing my old Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin albums. When two survivors of Led Zeppelin played on television recently, my children were captivated.

Popular music in our parents' time was awful, ours was good enough to be enjoyed by our children and today's music is a mixture of so many ideas that it cannot fail to impress someone – and I comfort myself with the knowledge that John Peel is older than me!

ANNETTE MILNES (aged 45^{1/2})

Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire

The cunning man in the disintegrating shorts

A MOST extraordinary case is going on in the High Court at the moment, in which a rugby player is being prosecuted for misrepresentation, unlawful trading, and 20 other similar charges – and all because he invented a new kind of rugby shirt. But perhaps a brief extract from the trial will enlighten you.

Counsel: Now, Mr Pratt, you are a professional rugby player, are you not?

Pratt: I am.

Counsel: I believe you have invented a new kind of rugby shirt?

Pratt: I believe that too.

Counsel: Could you give the court a brief description of your revolutionary new rugby shirt?

Pratt: Certainly. You are probably well aware that rugby is the only game in which a player can be

legally held on to by his clothing. In cricket or football, to grasp a player by his shirt and hold him would be viciously against the rules. In tennis it is unheard of. I believe the only other contact games in which you are encouraged to hold on to the enemy are derivatives of rugby like American football.

But in rugby it is quite common to tackle a man by holding his clothing rather than getting him cleanly round the legs. Well, it occurred to me that if you invented a shirt which was just several panels of cloth held together by Velcro, then whenever you were tackled by the shirt, the piece of shirt your opponent was holding would come away in his hands and you would just run on down the field.

Counsel: And you have produced such a shirt?

Pratt: I have. It has made me much more difficult to hold on to. Indeed, I have scored many tries since I first used this shirt.

Counsel: And lost many items of clothing as well, no doubt?

Pratt: After a while, the pitch certainly does become strewn with bits of your shirt. And of course the opposition doesn't particularly like coming away with empty hands after trying to tackle you, so they tend not to return the bit of shirt. In fact, they tend to drop it on the ground and jump up and down on it in rage.

Counsel: Does the same apply to your shorts?

Pratt: Do people jump up and down on my shorts in rage?

Counsel: No, I mean, have you also devised a pair of shorts made of detachable pieces held on by Velcro?

Pratt: I have. I haven't tried them in public as I am not sure whether a man with pieces of his shorts torn

away might not be prosecuted for offending public decency.

Counsel: But a man wearing no shirt is quite decent?

Pratt: Oh, yes. In some sports it is even against the law to wear a shirt, and you are forced to go shirtless.

Counsel: Name one.

Pratt: Swimming.

Counsel: Hm... Name another.

Pratt: Boxing.

Judge: I think he's got you there, old boy. I'd switch the line of attack, if I were you.

Counsel: Very good, my Lord. Now,

Mr Pratt, you are aware that this new shirt of yours is considered unsporting by other players?

Pratt: Unsporting? In what sense?

Counsel: In the sense that it is

against the spirit of the game.

Pratt: That is absolutely not so. The

spirit of the game of rugby is to

evade capture by any means possible. That is why you are allowed to push your hand in the enemy's face to feed him off. That's why you struggle as hard as possible to loosen his grip, or indeed run along with high-kicking knees to make tackling more difficult. My shirt is entirely in the spirit of the game.

Judge: I think he's got you again, old boy. Try another tack. Go up the blind side.

Counsel: Yes, my Lord... How do you mean, up the blind side?

Judge: Well, ask him a question he's not expecting.

Counsel: Yes, my Lord... Like what, my Lord?

Judge: Oh, for heaven's sake! Well,

ask him if it has occurred to him that martial arts like jiu-jitsu

are based entirely on clothes being grasped?

Counsel: I like it! Tell me, Mr

Pratt, has it occurred to you that in some sports, like jiu-jitsu, the grasping of garments is the very essence of the sport?

Pratt: Yes.

Counsel: Can you imagine what it would be like if sumo wrestlers had loin cloths attached only by Velcro and lost their clothing bit by bit during a bout? Would the sight not be revolting?

Pratt: The sight of sumo

wrestlers is revolting enough already, even when they have their loins clothed.

Judge: I think he's got you there again, George!

Pratt: Yes, my Lord. Any other questions you suggest I might ask him?

Judge: Can't think of any. Let's adjourn and think about it.

The case continues.



MILES KINGTON

'The spirit of the game of rugby is to evade capture by any means possible'

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THE INDEPENDENT

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Please calm down and concentrate on the real issues

A LEADING Tory grandee has suggested that this newspaper should hand back the awards it was given last week because it has failed to cover the furore about the Home Secretary's weekend break in France. This pathetic outburst is a depressing reminder of just how infantile politics in this country has become. So is Norman Fowler's call for Jack Straw to "consider his position", especially since he had earlier denied that there was anything wrong with Mr Straw's trip.

Sir Norman has made himself look silly, which is all the more surprising for such a normally shrewd politician. He has allowed Labour to counter-attack with the allegation that the Conservatives are a sloppy and amateur opposition - which they certainly appear to be, given their disarray over Europe, and the invisible men and women who have been awarded most of the shadow portfolios.

Others have behaved in just as silly a manner. A press frenzy has developed, and not just in the tabloid newspapers. One newspaper has referred to Mr Straw "sneaking" back into Britain; another offered rewards to find him. Yet another seemed to think that Mr Straw had jetted off to the type of sunshine holiday that many ordinary citizens cannot afford, rather than a prearranged budget break in cloudy Nice, which is at present basking in temperatures of only 59 degrees Fahrenheit.

Ministers don't deserve sympathy than executives in other walks of life. But they don't deserve less. They work long hours for relatively little pay compared with the private sector. They carry heavy responsibilities with their every move subject to intense scrutiny. Never was this more true than during Mr Straw's last week at work, when he had to deal with the explosive issue of racism and the police. He deserved a holiday after that. Ideally, perhaps, he should have been present in the debate over the release of witnesses' names in the Lawrence report, but in his absence Paul Boateng is a competent minister, fully able to apologise on behalf of the Home Office for mistakes in the report. What is the point of ministers of state, if they are not able to deputise for their superiors?

We are tempted to agree with the Prime Minister's spokesman, Alastair Campbell, and his recent complaints about the "dumbing down" of national political debate. Unable to focus for more than one or two days on the real policy details of any story, opposition politicians and newspapers seem to have got their comment ideas stuck in a groove, continually expressing outrage and calling for resignations.

There are understandable reasons for this, including the arrogant obtuseness of ministers in the last government, who seemed to be temperamentally unable to resign even when their policies were utterly discredited.



But the desire to inflict harm at any cost to figures in public life is now becoming unhealthy. There are a number of recent examples of this. Robin Cook's private life has elicited more attention than the issue of Sierra Leone, which is a matter of real public concern rather than prurient gossip. The sexual orientation of Nick Brown, the agriculture minister, was awarded more yards of newsprint than were his farming policies. Some people seemed to think that the main issue raised by the Lawrence report was the future of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, rather than the problems of racism and police accountability.

The laudable objective of holding ministers to account, and making sure they cannot get away with their mistakes, has been forgotten in a mêlée that has now become so absurd that it would be laughable if it were not so depressing. Opposition politicians, and over-excited journalists, should take note: calm down, concentrate on real issues, and leave ministers' private lives alone.

Peace by diplomacy is Israel's best strategy

ISRAEL'S LATEST attacks on southern Lebanon were foreseeable: every round of killings in this painful saga is followed by a reprisal, each as depressing as the last. Unfortunately for Israel, such acts of revenge are likely to prove as counter-productive as they were predictable.

Israel has the right to defend herself; she is in Lebanon because of the attacks originally of the Palestinians and then of the Iranian-financed Hezbollah militia on civilian targets across the border. In the run-up to an election it was inevitable that any Israeli government would hit back following the bomb attack that killed Brigadier General Erez Gerstein, the highest-ranked Israeli officer to be killed in Lebanon since the self-declared "security zone" was imposed in 1982. And it is worth remembering that Israel

is not the only villain of the piece, for Syria continues to occupy most of Lebanon long after the security situation - her initial excuse for intervention - has stabilised.

But to recognise all this is not to excuse Israel's great mistake: to think that security can be attained by military victory, rather than through true peace on her borders. Yes, Syria should withdraw from Lebanon; but no one really believes that will happen without Israel making a similar gesture, and without further progress being made on the vexed issue of the Golan Heights.

Unless Israeli politicians want to continue their own little Vietnam, and watch domestic and international support for their operations in Lebanon ebb away, they should seize the opportunity of political change in the Middle East, and open negotiations for withdrawal with the Lebanese government. The Oslo agreement with the PLO seemed unpalatable at the time but held out similar rewards: peace with security. Benjamin Netanyahu says that his aim is such a peace. He should prove it with deeds, as well as words.

The man who said I had a funny name is not, of course, a racist

THE YOUNG man next door is letting his flat. For some complicated reason this led his father, a retired man from Guildford, to contact us concerning insurance. When he phoned he spoke to my partner, who had to give him both our surnames. "Aaronovitch?" he immediately queried. "I'm surprised he hasn't changed his name." My partner was taken aback. "What did he mean?" she asked me later.

Yes, what did he mean? What were the assumptions that underlay his strange assertion? Maybe Mr Guildford had had many Jewish friends who, fearing prejudice, anglicised their surnames - and so he was merely a hit surprised at my family's courage. Possibly, but I don't think so.

No, I think it more likely that he just assumed that Jews generally changed their names so that they could assimilate in public, while retaining their separateness in private. It was what the converses (Jews who converted to Christianity) did in Spain during the Middle Ages, which was why the Inquisition burned so many of them. With us crafty (though brilliant) Levantines such deception is something of a habit.

We had never met, never spoken, never corresponded. Mr Guildford and I and yet he presumed it perfectly acceptable to speak like this to my partner. And I suddenly smelled the rancid whiff of the golf club committee. "Of course, chairman," says the membership secretary, "his name is really Goldfarb. He changed it to Gordon." With one imperious observation, Mr Guildford made me feel like an interloper in my own bloody house.

He didn't mean to, of course - they rarely do, not even the big ones. In Simon Heffer's exceptional biography of Enoch Powell, *Like The Roman*, Heffer allows that, after Powell's 1963 Birmingham speech, many black communities were "pitched into terror". But that, says Heffer, "was certainly not Powell's intention." Later Margaret Thatcher told Heffer that Powell was, in her opinion, "not a racist". Tony Benn, too, has never believed Powell was a racist. A TV trial of Powell last year produced a clear acquittal on the charge of racism.

Yet here, cited by Heffer, is Powell on his return from a visit to the US in 1967, just as Martin Luther King reached his zenith. "Integration of races of totally disparate origins and culture," wrote Powell, "is one of the great myths of our time. It has never worked through history." Except, of course, when it has. And here again is Powell in the same year, writing to Edward Heath. In this letter the aspect of race relations that bothers the non-racist Powell is "not discrimination by white against coloured, but of insolence by coloured towards white". My, but what a telling word that "insolence" is! Children are insolent towards adults, privates are insolent towards captains, and "coloureds" are insolent towards whites. Yet Maggie says that he was an honourable man.

As are they all honourable men. In the wake of the Macpherson report, with its definition of institutionalised racism and uncomfortable conclusions, sympathy for the Lawrence has been replaced as the dominant theme by something else.



DAVID AARONOVITCH

I'm amazed by the number of intelligent people who fail to grasp that you can be a racist without knowing it

Let two letters in yesterday's press stand for all. CR Howe from Hampshire in Hampshire and respects the tradition of the Lawrence memorial was the work of a white racist? Might it not have been someone from one or the other ethnic minority out to cause further problems for the police? The Chinese perhaps. Or maybe a cop-hating Vanuatu.

They are pretty typical. Yet they are not, of course, racists. Racists

wear pointy hats and sheets and say "nigger" and deface memorials (unless, of course, the fiendishly clever Somalis get there first). Consequently the ordinary non-racists will accept no definition of racism that suits them. The cap never, ever fits. Which is why they and their mouthpieces have been so offended by the recommendations and definitions in the Macpherson report.

There are some hostages to fortune in there. Critics of the report have zoomed in on some of the recommendations that changes in the law be reviewed, in particular concerning racism in private and the exceptional application of double jeopardy. I would just remind readers that Macpherson is very tentative here, suggesting only "that consideration should be given" to this, to that and to the other.

But the real quarry is Sir William's definition of racism. For some reason it evokes anger and denial among Britons of all classes and outlooks. Racism is held to be "conflict or words or practices which advantage or disadvantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. In its more subtle form it is as damaging as in its overt form."

To get to this conclusion Macpherson asked himself what psychology could have given rise to the treatment experienced by Duwayne Brooks and the Lawrences. In other words, he took the effects and worked backwards, rather than beginning and ending with intent. He concluded that an absence of active desire to harm people is not an absolute when

people are indeed harmed by your actions and attitudes.

So, can you be a racist without knowing it? Yes. Of course. It doesn't make you a member of the Ku Klux Klan, or even a bad person. But it does mean that, with a bit of thought, you might behave more admirably and more fairly. In some cases this will make little or death difference, but in, say, the police force it is crucial. It is certainly something to think about if you are inclined to shower journalistic awards on the likes of Richard Littlejohn and Gary Bushell, or to excuse Bernard Manning.

This week I have been astonished by the number of intelligent folk who cannot grasp this or who see it as a first move towards planting microchip implants in their heads. True, it is a more sophisticated argument than the one we had back in the late Sixties. I believe that we can cope with the complexity precisely because we have progressed since then and we are a more advanced nation. However, we still have work to do. In Eltham, in 1993, there was a lynching and the sheriff didn't catch the killers. And we can do a whole lot better.

Mr Guildford, I reiterate, didn't get this first thing about me. But the second he heard my name a picture began to assemble itself in his brain: the foreign moniker triggered an assumption. It made me uncomfortable, but it doesn't matter too much. That's because (a) I don't wear my name on a placard everywhere I go; (b) he's not a policeman; and (c) my son has not just been stabbed in the heart while waiting for the bus.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We do have obligations to our families, even if we are politicians."

Jack Straw,
Home Secretary

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Never to talk about oneself is a very refined form of hypocrisy."

Friedrich Nietzsche,
German philosopher

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MANY NIGERIANS hope that Mr Obasanjo's rule will end the military's political role. This is unlikely. Mr Obasanjo, president from 1976 to 1979, is the only military ruler to leave office voluntarily. Yet he is still close to the armed forces. Reversing Delta poverty is a task that may be hindered by his links to the armed forces. To have any success in tackling Nigeria's daunting problems, Mr Obasanjo must make his government not the last stage

in a military transition, but the first stage of full civilian rule.

The New York Times, US

IT IS important to commend Abubakar for driving towards civil democracy. This commendation is proper, given the unpopularity of the decision to maintain the military as the permanent head of state.

Leadership, to facilitate the permanent removal of the military from partisan politics, as we begin to pursue the business of national recovery and regeneration. This in-coming government must take off with that assignment.

Post Express, Nigeria

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Nigeria will not be easy to eradicate. The marginalisation of the southern tribes by northern rule, and the economic backwardness of the north, are not issues that President can decree away. They require committed and honest hard work by all Nigerians. There is a need to send a strong message that there will be a day of reckoning for those who turn the gun on their own. The military, after 30 years in power, must surely know that no

elected government can be as incompetent as it has been in governing the nation.

The Nation, Kenya

THE ABUBAKAR transition programme has travelled far, and the climax of the electoral process, the presidential election, will enable Nigeria to enter the next millennium free and democratic, with the will of the people established as supreme.

Daily Graphic, Ghana

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
World comment on the weekend's presidential elections in Nigeria

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PANDORA

JOHNNY DEPP is set to star in the supernatural thriller *The Ninth Gate*, Roman Polanski's first film since 1995. The exiled director was forced to abandon *The Double* three years ago after John Travolta stormed off the set and Sean Penn, Robert de Niro and Al Pacino all suddenly discovered previous commitments preventing them stepping before his cameras. Paris-based Polanski has been negotiating with the Los Angeles District Attorney's office to have charges dropped dating from an incident more than 20 years ago when he was accused of having sex with a 13-year-old girl. With paedophilia in the Nineties occupying the position that Communism did in the Fifties as the zeitgeist's pariah vice, sources say the Polish-born cultur has been advised not to hold his breath.

CHARLES KENNEDY is not universally popular among his party's older statesmen. Politicos know that when the precocious Kennedy first won Ross Crromary & Skye at the age of 23, David Owen responded: "Who? Where?" But delve into Owen's memoirs and you'll discover that Roy Jenkins thought Kennedy was one of a group of SDP types who were "mesmerised" by the vampiric Owen, while Bob Maclellan described the young Scot as a "Judas" after voting against a motion particularly close to Bob's heart. But Kennedy, Harvey, Hughes and other putative Lib Dem leadership contenders may rest assured that Owen should be distracted from meddling in the contest by his new fondness for some daft euro-bashing.

BEVERLEY HILLS citizens will vote this spring on an ordinance that would compel local furriers to tag merchandise with labels stating: "This product is made with fur from animals that may have been killed by electrocution, gassing, neck-breaking." Some London resident Diana Ross (pictured) is leading the fur fans: Georgia-born belle Kim Basinger the antis. One Hollywood cynic says that the plan is academic anyway: "I don't think a stupid label's going to make any difference. In this town, women get minks the way minks get minks."



PARLIAMENTARIANS CONCERNED about GM foods are being served mixed messages by the Commons Catering Committee Chairman Dennis Turner MP. In July, he told his

Lewes counterpart Norman Baker that no frankenfoods would sulky Westminster's crockery. Then he sent MPs a letter last week stating "the Catering Committee does not have a policy of banning such foods". Foodies confused by this neither flesh-nor-fowl stance are now being told that there is a third way. According to the Director of Catering Services, no ban exists but there is "a policy of avoiding... the use of foods that are known to contain genetically modified organisms". Pass the hot potates.

IT'S A question that is preoccupying Millbank's young, hot-shot webmeisters. They had an irate call from Culture Secretary Chris Smith after he discovered the official Labour Party website listed him as single. This must have come as something of a surprise to Dorian Jairi, the force behind the Tools for Schools computer recycling initiative and he and Smith live together in Islington with their Tibetan terrier, Tian, and are a long-time, long-term couple. Smith's fusillade triggered a volley of calls from other ministers. One wants to post a new picture because the current snap makes his face "look too fat". Another has demanded the removal of all dates from her biography to "avoid her looking so old". Pandora has bottles of fizzy pop chilling on ice for the first readers to successfully identify the two ministers concerned.

PAPARAZZI SNAPS have surfaced showing Doris Day, 73, smogging her next door neighbour, some silver-tongued lothario of 79. Whipcrack away!

LONDON IS sinking. The capital's water table is at its depth of 30 years ago; a well in Trafalgar Square is filling up at the rate of three metres per year. London Transport is concerned enough to be meeting insurance experts to analyse the implications.

Thames Water predicts that drilling holes to pump away a projected 70 million litres of surplus water will cost £10m plus £2m per year for subsequent maintenance. Look for gushing mayoral wannabees to start fishing for

those floating voters on a No Flooding platform. But how it will go down in west London's bijou Little Venice?

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Hail the prophet of masculinism



TERENCE BLACKER
With 'The Whole Man', Dr Greer has returned to one of the most important issues of our time: men

acceptable for a concerned, post-New-Balls man to dress sexily in figure-hugging jeans? Does conforming to the socially approved habit of, say, removing excess hair from one's nostrils represent an acceptance of an oppressive feminine aesthetic?

Dr Gerry Greer was in the forefront of these urgent male debates. When he revealed to a shocked world that, at the age of 19, he had been sexually harassed by an older woman, many of his fellow male writers were quick to confess that they too had been traumatised by ravishing, exploitative women. For the first time, it became movingly clear that, in a very real sense, all men were essentially victims.

Now and then, a woman would try to enter the debate with contributions which all right-thinking men quickly recognised as misguided, opinionated or simply irrelevant.

Encouraged by the flukish success of the American best-seller *Iron JoAnna*, an absurd and frankly rather sinister new-age volume which encouraged women to go to the woods together and get in touch with their inner bitches,

British writers like Nellie Lyndon and Davida Thomas published books expressing a female perspective on the gender debate. They were widely ridiculed by all right-thinking men as hopeless inadequates whose views were utterly irrelevant to what was essentially an all-male debate.

Not that the views of Dr Gerry Greer always found favour with what the media had come to describe as "the brotherhood". On one occasion he fell out with a fellow writer who had falsely alleged that Greer's views on parenthood had been informed by a vasectomy at the age of 25. A discussion ensued in which Gerry described his critic as a bald-pated git with fuck-me brogues and three pairs of socks stuffed down the front of his underpants.

If at this point, certain people had become tired of the debate, they did not include publishers or features editors. Dr Greer was paid £500,000 to update his views. *The Daily Telegraph* excitedly serialised it for a week. Less important news topics - the world economy, the future of Europe, the rise of biotechnology.

the death of the countryside - were kicked out of the broadsheet newspapers to make way for page after page in which every prominent media male was asked to react to Dr Greer's exciting new views.

Naturally, there were a few naysayers and sexists who argued that after 30 years, the New-Balls debate had become little more than a media circle jerk of interest only to the writers participating in it. It was said that most of the questions being discussed by this small, self-obsessed group of pundits were utterly irrelevant to the lives of men in the outside world, earning a living or bringing up a family. The subject had become dull, it was argued. While the discussion of gender relations had once been important, there really were rather more urgent matters to discuss at the end of the millennium.

It was even suggested that, in the acres of newsprint devoted to the issue, the reactions of one or two women might occasionally have been of interest. Unfortunately, none could be found who gave a toss about Dr Gerry Greer and his new improved views on the whole man.

Life outside Euroland is rich and full of promise



HAMISH MCRAE
The nations that have decided against joining the euro are not poor, isolated little countries

ANYONE WHO believes that joining Euroland is somehow inevitable may like to consider the alternative: remaining a member of Northland.

Northland? Never heard of it. No, because it does not exist. But if you were to add up the Western European countries that are not members of the euro and call them Northland, you would have a country that would be slightly larger even than Germany both in population and economic output. Were Northland a single country, it would be the third largest economy in the world.

Who is in Northland? Well, there is the UK for a start. There are the other two Western European non-euro members of the EU, Sweden and Denmark, and three other European countries outside the EU, Switzerland, Norway and - not to be forgotten - Iceland. (I haven't counted the territories that are associated with the UK but are outside the EU - the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and Gibraltar, though added together they have almost the same population as Iceland: 250,000 against 270,000.)

The total population of Northland is 65.2 million, which compares with Germany's 82.1; their total GDP last year was \$2.207bn (£1.300bn), compared with Germany's \$2.132bn (£1.250bn); and GDP per head was almost identical at \$25,900 (£15,200) per head, compared with Germany's \$23,970 and an average for Euroland of \$22,130 (£13,000).

How come Northland is richer than Euroland? The main reason is that Switzerland, Norway and Denmark all have GDP per head well above \$30,000 a year; the UK pulls the average down, but since it has narrowed the gap with continental Europe over the last seven years, not by very much. The UK GDP per head, at \$23,474, is now more than

10 per cent higher than Italy and only 3 per cent lower than France.

But leave aside the current numbers and look at the commercial strengths, for this gives a fairer picture of Northland's economic future.

The key point to grasp is that by and large Northland is particularly strong in rising industries and is not heavily represented in declining ones. Both the UK and Switzerland have strong international financial service industries. You may not have noticed, but two British banks, Lloyds and HSBC, have become the second and third largest banks in the world by market value, behind the US Citigroup but far larger than Deutsche Bank, continental Europe's largest bank. The UK and Switzerland, with Sweden, also dominate European pharmaceuticals. In communications, Sweden's Ericsson is one of the two main European mobile phone manufacturers (the other being Nokia in Finland), while Britain's Vodafone looks like becoming one of the three or four global mobile phone operators.

But wait a minute, you may say. This is all fantasy, for Northland is not

The negatives are quite short. Northland is lightly exposed to old industries such as steel and coal; it has a small (and, in the case of Denmark, particularly efficient) agricultural sector. The UK has managed to downsize its ailing motor industry, while Sweden has sold control of Saab and is in the process of selling Volvo. Northland is also particularly strong in developing intellectual property exports. The United States is the largest net exporter of intellectual property in the world, but the UK is second and Sweden is third. By contrast, Euroland is a net importer. As trade moves from shifting goods around to shifting ideas, Northland gains more and more of an advantage over Euroland.

Partly as a result of this nimble restructuring of its industries, Northland has half the unemployment of Euroland: just under 5 per cent, compared with 10 per cent.

There is one further reason for optimism about the economic future of Northland compared with Euroland. It has a more favourable demographic outlook. The two largest members of Northland, the UK and Sweden, have reasonably high birth rates: with the exception of Ireland, Sweden has the highest of the EU's fertility rates, while Britain's, at 1.8 babies per mother, is also relatively high. By contrast, Euroland has three of the lowest fertility rates, with Germany, Italy and Spain all around the level of 1.2 to 1.3 babies per mother. In another 30 years' time Euroland will have a vast army of retired people supported by a smaller population of working age.

In Northland the balance between workers and dependants will have deteriorated, but by nothing like the same extent.

The point of all this is not to argue for or against British membership of the euro. That is a decision that goes far beyond economics. It is simply to point out that the Western European nations that have chosen, for whatever reason, not to become the founding members of the euro zone are not poor, isolated little countries left, somehow, out in the cold. Not only are they in total at least as successful economically as the members of the euro zone, they are larger than the euro zone's largest member, Germany. Most important of all, a rational assessment of their comparative advantages and disadvantages suggests that on balance they will probably do better than the euro zone countries in the future.

We all tend to assume that political unity brings economic prosperity: that the economies of scale from access to a larger market makes everyone richer. I'm not sure that was ever true, but in so far as it was, the advantage of being part of a larger economic bloc has surely waned. In so far as Switzerland, Sweden and the UK have been successful, it has been by looking at the world as their market, not just Europe. It is not that the EU is too big a market; it is too small. As for political unity, Northland does well precisely because it does not exist.

The moment they launch the "no" to challenge the euro, it will be time to head for the boats.



Stockholm, the wealthy capital of a prosperous country

a country. It has no single political control, no common ideology, no particular vision of what Europe ought to be, and certainly no common currency.

That is precisely the point. Northland can be successful without any of these things. It can be more successful than Euroland. It already is in terms of wealth per head; and as I have tried to indicate, its advantage is likely to grow because of its more favourable commercial structure and its more favourable demographics. Being physically close to markets is irrelevant if your output is very light (like pharmaceuticals) and so can be transported very quickly and cheaply, or is weightless (like software, research and telecommunications). Being on the fringe of a larger economic zone used to be a disadvantage. Now it has become irrelevant.

The point of all this is not to argue for or against British membership of the euro. That is a decision that goes far beyond economics. It is simply to point out that the Western European nations that have chosen, for whatever reason, not to become the founding members of the euro zone are not poor, isolated little countries left, somehow, out in the cold. Not only are they in total at least as successful economically as the members of the euro zone, they are larger than the euro zone's largest member, Germany. Most important of all, a rational assessment of their comparative advantages and disadvantages suggests that on balance they will probably do better than the euro zone countries in the future.

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The moment they launch the "no" to challenge the euro, it will be time to head for the boats.

We must break the chains of debt



PODIUM

ANDREW SIMMS
From a lecture at the Union Chapel, Highbury, London, by the Christian Aid campaigner

THE HISTORIAN James Walvin asked whether the Atlantic slave trade was the beginning of a process that has continued into the 20th century, of European and American economic forces draining Africa of its raw materials and permanently exploiting its cheap and pliant labour, offering little in return but enhanced privation.

The similarities are too disturbing to dismiss. Both the slave trade and the debt crisis exact a human cost. More than 1.5 million Africans died just during the infamous sea passage. Life expectancy at their destination under the plantation owners was only between seven and 10 years. Now in heavily indebted sub-Saharan Africa, life expectancy is a quarter of a century lower than it is in Britain or the US.

Slaves were sold in early 17th-century Britain for an average price of 24 5s 6d. In sub-Saharan Africa in 1996 the average debt per person was \$79 (£250), many times more than the average income. There is one especially sinister and exact echo between the two great injustices. Towards the end of slavery in the Americas there was a whole new meaning to the concept of moral hazard.

Opponents of realistic debt relief say that countries must remain creditworthy. But the very existence of the debt overhang scares away investors. What about military spending? All governments spend on weapons. Per person, our governments spend far more than those in Africa. Let's just ask who is selling the guns in the first place.

Outlawing slavery in Britain took at least 30 years of foot-dragging and delay. In 1756, a

commitment to gradual abolition prompted one member of parliament to protest, "How can you carry on the slave trade moderately? How can a country be pillaged and destroyed in moderation?" We cannot modify injustice. The question is, to what period we shall prolong it. The new Archbishop of Cape Town comments that the external debt of developing countries has become an eternal debt.

The Group of Seven nations (G7), plus Russia, met this year in Cologne. Better debt relief for the poorest countries was high on their agenda. Each year when they meet they propose to find a solution to the debt crisis.

Nearly two centuries ago, in 1814 and 1815, the rulers of Europe met in Vienna and Paris. They were lobbied by abolitionists such as Thomas Clarkson. No deal was agreed, even though they accepted that slavery was the desolation of Africa, the degradation of Europe and the afflicting scourge of humanity. Will the G7 in Cologne air the same concern, and also delay action?

In Tanzania, more is spent on debt service than on health

FOR LET

ROBERT FISCH

THE END

NORTH AND SOUTH

SUNDAY POEM

ACC FOR

For Lebanon, read Vietnam



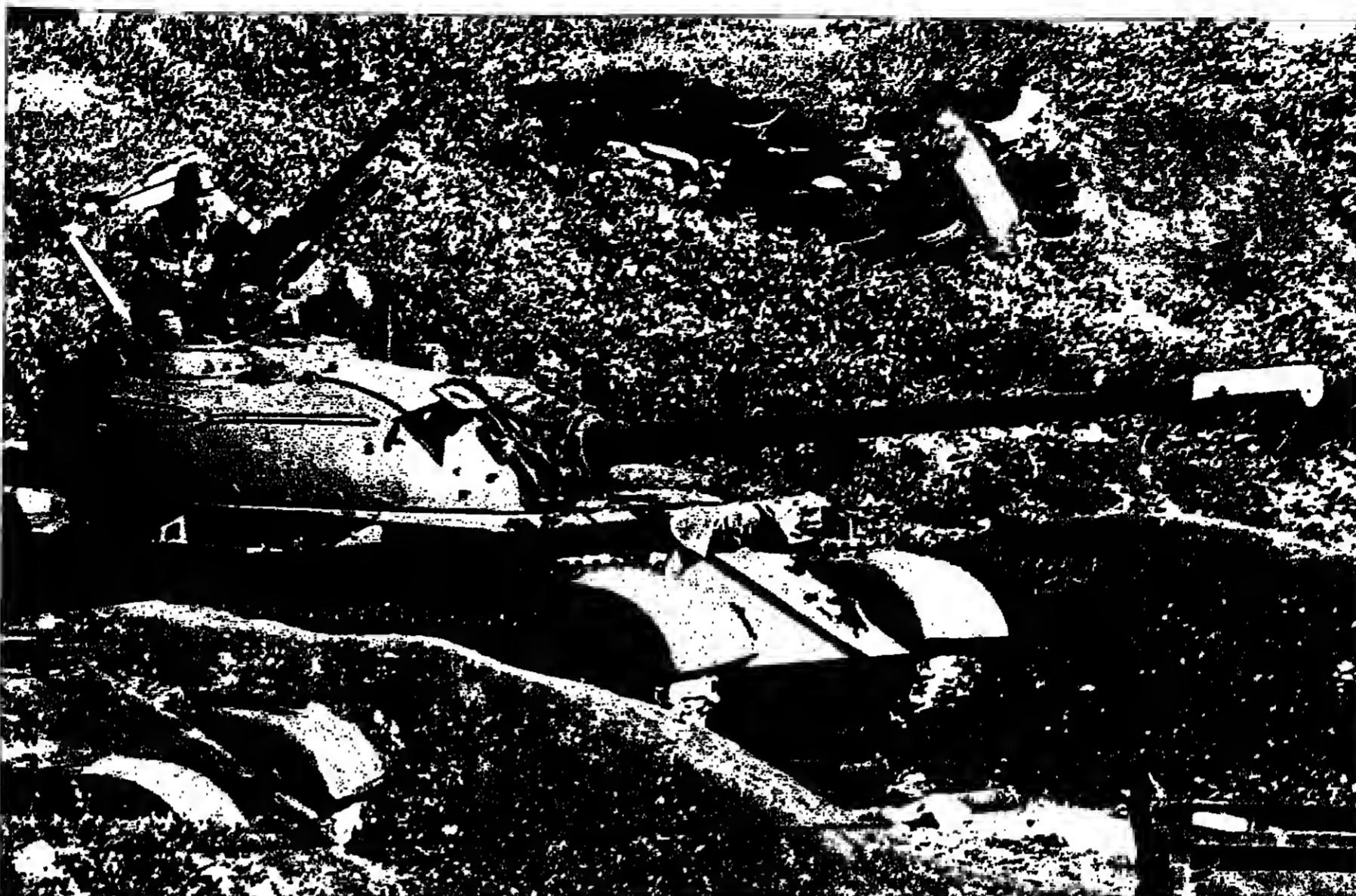
ROBERT FISK
Hizbullah has carefully copied Israel's old tactics and turned them against the Israeli army

THE PALESTINIANS used to promise that Lebanon would be Israel's Vietnam. The Israelis laughed at this, invaded Lebanon in 1982 (for the second time in four years), drove the PLO from Beirut and – by the sheer ferocity of their assault – created Hizbullah. And Hizbullah has now fulfilled the Palestinian prediction. Not only has Israel lost the Lebanon war – it has been comprehensively defeated by one of the world's most professional guerrilla armies – but America's ally in the Middle East does not frighten the Lebanese any more.

Last week, it was an Israeli colonel and two of his soldiers who were killed in occupied southern Lebanon; this week it is a general and three of his soldiers, all ambushed inside an area which the Israelis still, incredibly, call their "security zone". And what was the Israeli response? The same rhetoric from the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, about "striking at terrorism" that the Lebanese have been hearing for more than 20 years.

The vacuity of Israel's much trumpeted "revenge" was all too evident in the name it chose for its latest retaliation into Lebanon: "Operation Land, Sea and Air." The pitiful truth is that not a single Israeli soldier dare any longer stray outside the occupation zone; not one Israeli soldier will advance on foot or even with tanks to attack Hizbullah guerrillas. So much for the "land" element of the operation. There will be no armoured land assault. The usual artillery bombardments will be fired into Lebanon and in the past 48 hours, we've witnessed the usual air attacks – around 23 raids, bringing the total number of air strikes on Lebanon in the past 12 months to close on 1,400. And the little Helz-class gunboat banging away at the old Palestinian camp at Nahme south of Beirut – at a target that has not the slightest connection with Hizbullah – is not going to worry the men who are destroying the Israeli army in southern Lebanon.

Needless to say, the Americans – for the 23rd time in 20 years, by my count – have called on both sides "to exercise restraint". And, as usual, Israel's friends have been



A soldier sitting on his tank yesterday in southern Lebanon after Israel said it would attack Hizbullah targets to avenge the killing of a general Haim Hava/Reuters

telling the story from Israel's point of view. CNN told its viewers of the Israeli civilians close to the Lebanese border who had to spend the night in bomb shelters for fear of a Hizbullah attack that never came. There was, of course, no report of the Lebanese civilians who had to spend the night under real Israeli attack.

In reality, Hizbullah has assiduously copied Israel's old tactics – and turned them against the Israeli army. When Israel began using analogue-system detonation for bombs hidden in rocks to ambush Hizbullah, the guerrillas duplicated the Israeli technology and added booby traps of their own. When the Israelis dressed their great Merkava tanks in armour to prevent rocket attacks, Hizbullah learned to fire missiles between the plates. When the Israelis boasted of their intelligence prowess in southern Lebanon, Hizbullah suborned or blackmailed Israel's Lebanese collaborators and forced them to betray the Israelis.

The two most recent ambushes – like the destruction of an Israeli commando unit at Aansariyah last year (itself on an ambush mission) – were all set up by Hizbullah with

the help of men inside Israel's occupation zone, some of them members of Israel's own proxy South Lebanon Army gunmen. This was the very ramshackle militia to which General Erez Gerstein, Israel's latest victim in southern Lebanon, was the liaison officer – so no wonder Hizbullah knew his route and the time of his arrival. Some of the bombs which killed him were even hanging from the branches of trees, just like the explosives which killed the Israelis at Aansariyah.

But Hizbullah has copied another, far more devastating tactic of the Israelis. In the past, it was Israeli policy to make the Lebanese civilian population pay for the presence of guerrillas in southern Lebanon. The idea was simple: so greatly would the civilians suffer that they would force the Lebanese government to disarm the guerrillas – and save Israel the hard fighting involved in crushing the guerrillas themselves. But now it is Hizbullah that is threatening to fire salvos of rockets into Israel if the Israelis do not cease their attacks. And it is the Israelis who are pleading with their government – to withdraw Israeli troops from southern Lebanon.

Of course, the Vietnam parallels can be taken too far. The war in southern Lebanon is not on the awesome scale of the conflict in Southeast Asia. Deaths on both sides are running at a maximum of only a dozen a week. Israelis are not deserting in masses in order to avoid soldiering in southern Lebanon. And Hizbullah is not going to pour over the border into Israel in the event of an Israeli retreat.

The similarities are closer to Shimon Peres's torment three years ago. Anxious to prove he was "tough on terrorism" before an Israeli election, he launched a bombardment against Hizbullah in which Israeli artillerymen massacred 106 refugees in a UN camp in a bloodbath at Qana and which brought down more rockets in retaliation on northern Israel than the total in the last 40 years.

Mr Netanyahu now also faces an election in 10 weeks and also wants to prove that he is "tough on terrorism". Already he is speaking of revenge for "the criminal attacks on our towns and villages" – a meretricious statement (unchallenged, of course, by CNN) that totally avoids the truth that the Israeli general and his comrades were killed not in Israel but in Israeli-occupied southern Lebanon.

But the Israeli public is not so easily fooled. The growing movement of Israeli mothers demanding an end to this pointless, hopeless occupation is larger now than it was when Peres was prime minister. Will Mr Netanyahu listen to these voices? Or will he stick to the old, brutal policies pursued with such ferocity almost two decades ago by his current foreign minister, Ariel Sharon. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, Israeli leaders use to threaten. Now, however, that is Hizbullah's motto.

RIGHT OF REPLY

RICHARD BURGE



The chief executive of the Countryside Alliance replies to yesterday's article by Andreas Whittam Smith

IN HIS article, Andreas Whittam Smith asks for evidence of anti-rural prejudice – he needs only to read his own words for the answer. He promotes ignorance of the issues and peddles the very myths that cause acute resentment against the countryside.

Mr Whittam Smith promotes the needs of industrial workers against the needs of rural communities. It is simply not true that the Government is neglecting urban industry in order to featherbed the countryside. A £200m package is reportedly on the cards to help BMW at Rover's Longbridge plant. A mere £120m was scraped together for the entire farming industry as an emergency package.

More importantly, Mr Whittam Smith does not understand the nature of work in the countryside. Most farmers are self-employed, alongside their families.

Farming is not simply a job, it is a livelihood. If you are made redundant in an urban area, you have access to retraining and jobs created in new industries.

In rural areas you lose your home and capital, and there is not even a job centre. British farmers – or most of them on small tenanted holdings – are more victims than beneficiaries of the perversities of the Common Agricultural Policy. It is the only industry nationalised at a European level. A traditionally self-reliant people have far less mobility than urban workers. They are trapped in a game that robs them of self-determination.

The One Man and his Dog issue is not about a reluctance to change. It was the one programme about rural people made by rural people.

This piece will be put on our website. Hill farmers have access to the Internet. And Mr Whittam Smith says nothing changes in the countryside!

The end of the world news

TUESDAY BOOK

STATE OF THE WORLD 1999
EDITED BY LESTER BROWN AND CHRISTOPHER FLAVIN.
EARTHSCAN. £14.95

THIS IS the 16th annual audit of the global environment from the Washington think-tank the World Watch Institute. Once again, the message is "things are really bad... but don't give up hope". This year's tour of threats to the environment ranges across energy systems, urban life, forests and agriculture. But let's start with the oceans.

We depend on this extraordinary resource for vital and poorly understood global ecological services such as climate regulation, for 16 per cent of our animal protein, not to mention inspiration, beaches and tourism. Yet a breakdown of the world's marine ecosystems is staring us in the face. A 50-year resource-intensive binge of economic growth and personal consumption in the OECD countries, combined with breakneck industrialisation and population growth in the southern hemisphere, has taken us to the point of marine catastrophe.

So 60 per cent of the world's coral reefs are in danger of destruction; 60

per cent of the world's edible fish stocks are close to, or beyond, the point of collapse. Cyanide poisoning, as a mode of fishing, is on the rise. Fluorescent algal blooms have turned great swaths of the Gulf of Mexico into a dead zone. Heavy metals and organophosphates accumulate in every stage of the food chain, from phytoplankton via seals to the Canadian Inuit, dependent on their meat and blubber.

The numbers, the ecosystems and the industries change, but across the board, in this meticulously researched and calmly argued report, the story is the same. Fossil-fuel energy systems, pesticide- and irrigation-dependent farming, car-based transport and

regulated mega-cities have all created environmental problems that exceed their benefits. A century of unremitting growth has brought us accelerating climate change, declining water tables and disappearing rainforests. If you have not read a State of the World report before, it is almost impossible to read one and not conclude this cannot go on. It has to stop now. The 1999 edition is no different.

However, your reaction at the end will probably be: what is to be done? Last year, the worldwatchers were calling for visionary leadership in the US. So 1998 was a political non-starter. This year, in the concluding chapter, political responsibility is cast a little wider: governments, corporations, aid agencies and active citizens all get a look in. And, as the worldwatchers briskly state, there is no shortage of things to be done now.

Governments should be taxing pollution and resource consumption, not work and investment. They should subsidise renewable technologies and cyclists, and stop spending \$650bn a year of public money on logging, mining and motoring. Governments should write better environmental regulations, and enforce more assiduously those they already have. They could make available more information about pollution and its risks.

Smart companies should be thinking about how they can make a buck out of sustainable energy, transport and agriculture, rather than trying to squeeze the last drops of surplus out of a poisoned planet. It would also be helpful if they devoted less political en-

ergy to spiking international climate negotiations and biodiversity treaties.

The same goes for the international organisations and treaties that we do have. The World Bank, which invests six times as much in the global coal industry as in renewable energy and energy efficiency, could do with a sharp shift in priorities. The World Trade Organisation, as a start, could acquire some environmental priorities. It currently considers nearly all environmental regulations – such as banning the sale of shrimps caught with nets that kill rare sea-turtles – as illegal barriers to free trade.

As for us citizens, we need to get educated. If we could only see the world more holistically, if we could listen to alternative sources of moral knowledge, we could only think about our children's interests a bit more... All of this is true, but as a reader who has a few States of the Worlds under his belt, I have had enough education, and enough of the polite, painless optimism

of the worldwatchers. It's not their fault. If I were trying to influence the US Congress and mainstream US opinion, I too would probably be a polite educational optimist. However, there is a pressing need, when we speak to ourselves and to our elites, to be less measured and more angry.

At the latest conclave of the G7 finance ministers – the nearest thing we have to a directorate for the regulation of the global juggernaut – the only thing that the suits managed to agree upon in their banal communiqué was the need to "promote... strong and sustainable domestic-led growth"; by which they mean growth that just keeps on keeping on. These people may be running the planet, but they are not on it. I don't know whether to try to make them read State of the World, or just hit them with it.

DAVID GOLDBLATT

Should there be a tax on pollution?

Brian Harris

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DAVID GOLDBLATT

THE INDEPENDENT PHOTOGRAPH



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Professor Glenn Seaborg

GLENN SEABORG discovered plutonium, one of the world's most exciting substances.

Before dawn on 24 February 1941, the team of nuclear scientists he led at the University of California's Berkeley campus identified element 94 in the periodic table, second of the transuranium elements. If it had been made by atomic bombardment in a cyclotron, plutonium followed the discovery of neptunium, element 93, by Seaborg's colleague Edwin McMillan at Berkeley, in 1940.

Element 94 was named plutonium after Pluto, the next furthest planet from Earth. Seaborg and McMillan shared the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1951 for their discovery of what young Seaborg wanted to call the "actinide series" of the heaviest elements starting with element 88. "Don't do it," friends cautioned, "you'll ruin your scientific reputation," he recalled at a 50th anniversary meeting in 1991. "I had a great advantage," Seaborg replied. "I didn't have any reputation at that time."

His concept proved to have great predictive value, and helped the discovery of another 17 man-made elements of which he participated in a total of 10. In 1971 element 106 was named seaborgium – the first to be named after a living person. In 1991 the Seaborg Institute, devoted to the study of the 20 heaviest elements, from thorium (90), was inaugurated at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California.

No element has been more intensely studied or proved to have a more unruly and fascinating range of properties than plutonium. Seaborg called it the "ornery element". "When you hold a lump of plutonium in your hand it feels warm, like a live rabbit," observed a woman scientist who helped refine it during the Second World War.

Plutonium is a dark, silvery metal which when molten is chemically intensely reactive and very hard to contain. As a solid it exists in several different physical states with different properties, which makes metalworking extremely exasperating as it changes dramatically between states. But its paramount property is that the plutonium-239 isotope is fissile. It offered an alternative to uranium-235 as a potential nuclear explosive.

Seaborg could not even see his first speck of plutonium oxide, but the pressures of the new US Manhattan Project (developing the atomic bomb) soon had the science – and Seaborg – transferred to the Metallurgical Laboratory in Chicago, to work out ways of "mass producing" the metal. Here the first visible amount of plutonium was made: about one millionth of a gram.

Early in 1942, at a general conference on plutonium chemistry in Chicago, attended by Seaborg, two main tasks were identified. One was to separate the metal in the amounts and purity required for war purposes. The other was to obtain good understanding of the chemistry needed to build and maintain "atomic piles". Seaborg was appointed to lead the separation team.

In the next two years plutonium manufacture in atomic piles and refinement in kilogram quantities to provide the critical mass for a weapon scaled up the process ten billion times – "surely the greatest scale-up factor ever attempted", Seaborg was to remark.

The verdict of the official history of the Manhattan Project by H.D. Smyth in 1945 was: "Altogether the

Seaborg called it the 'ornery element'. When you hold a lump of plutonium in your hand it feels warm, like a live rabbit,' said a colleague

solving of many of the chemical problems has been one of the most remarkable achievements of the Metallurgical Laboratory." From the outset Seaborg was deeply concerned with the toxicity of the new metal, and the need to protect himself and his team from, in particular, airborne particles. He established safe laboratory practices which prevail to this day.

Plutonium's peculiarities lent themselves more readily to fanciful notions from opponents of nuclear weapons and later nuclear power than the other nuclear explosive, uranium-235. So pervasive was an erroneous mythology of plutonium by the mid-1970s that, in Britain, the report of the Windscale Inquiry by Mr Justice Parker spelled out seven of the "misunderstandings" that current. His report was implemented but the myths still prevail widely.

In 1961, when the US and Britain were building their first power reactors, Seaborg was appointed by President Kennedy as chairman of the powerful US Atomic Energy Commission and the President's

Glen Theodore Seaborg was born in 1912 in Ishpeming, Michigan, an iron mining town on the Upper Peninsula. His father was the son of Swedish immigrants, and his mother an immigrant herself. Seaborg spoke Swedish before learning English. He received his first degree in chemistry from the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1934, and a PhD three years later. That year, 1937, he was appointed a research associate at Berkeley and began his association with such greats of US physics as E.O. Lawrence and J. Robert Oppenheimer, the founders of nuclear science. Seaborg married Helen Griggs in 1942, the year he moved to Chicago.

Seaborg's publications include *The Chemistry of the Actinide Elements*, with Joseph J. Katz, published in 1958; *The Transuranium Elements* (1959); *Education and the Atom* (with Daniel M. Wilkes, 1954); *Men and Atom* (with William A. Corliss, 1971); *Nuclear Milestones* (1972) and *Transuranium Elements: products of modern alchemy* (with others, 1978).

As a pioneer of nuclear alchemy, Seaborg's many scientific awards and prizes included the Enrico Fermi Award of the US Atomic Energy Commission, in 1957. It was then worth \$50,000. Later came the Priestley Medal of the American Chemical Society in 1979, the Henry De Wolf Smyth Award of the American Nuclear Society in 1982, and the Actinide Award in 1984.

Glen Seaborg returned to academic life in 1971, and to a fruitful period as scientist, teacher, administrator and government adviser from his original base at Berkeley.

DAVID FISHLOCK

Glen Seaborg was a formidable presence, writes Tam Dalyell. I met him in the summer of 1965, when I was asked to stay in the house of Bill Carey, then the senior official in the Bureau of the Budget responsible for the funding of the science and space programme.

I was grilled by this man with piercing eyes on the likely policies towards and consequences for nuclear energy of the incoming 1964 Labour government. When I explained that some of the younger Labour MPs were fiercely pro-nuclear, because by we saw the price of coal being often

ed States direct, then Lyndon Johnson. Parliamentary questions would not have dissuaded Harold Wilson from going ahead with the Aldabra staging post. But a question from LBJ, prompted by Seaborg and Ripley, was altogether another matter.

As Wilson wryly put it to me some months later in connection with Aldabra – he was a generous soul – "You certainly went to the right people in Washington to scupper our proposal!"

Glen Theodore Seaborg, chemist: born Ishpeming, Michigan 19 April 1912; Resident Associate, College of Chemistry, University of California, Berkeley 1937-39, Instructor, Department of Chemistry 1939-41, Assistant Professor 1941-45, Professor 1945-71, Chancellor 1958-61, University Professor of Chemistry 1971-99; Nobel Prize for Chemistry (jointly with Edwin McMillan) 1951; Chairman, US Atomic Energy Commission 1961-71; married 1942 Helen Griggs (three sons, two daughters, one son deceased); died Lafayette, California 25 February 1999.



AP

Stanley Dance

IT IS a testimony to their ability to write well and to communicate lucidly that Leonard Feather and Stanley Dance, both British writers, were able to move to the United States and rise to the top of the heap as experts on jazz, a completely American art.

The textbooks say that Dance went to live in Connecticut in 1937. He found this suggestion offensive: he had stayed in England throughout the Second World War. Total deafness in one ear precluded him from army service and he worked in his father's tobacco business until, inheriting the company himself, he sold up and went to live in the US in 1939.

Only Feather ever made a living out of jazz journalism. Dance needed the financial cushion that he got from selling up his father's firm when he left. The move was prompted too because his Canadian-born wife, Helen Oakley, a jazz authority and record producer in her own right, didn't like the English climate. Oakley had organised concerts for Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw. Mainstream was to encompass the work of black musicians including Duke Ellington, Earl Hines, Count Basie, Coleman Hawkins and Buck Clayton. The music and its roots were similar.

The unspoken reverse discrimination on grounds of colour was hard to reconcile. Although Dance's actions helped to bring them new prosperity, the subjects of his new category were not impressed and some felt that he was being patronising.

Dance's interest in jazz had begun when he was a pupil at Framlingham College in Suffolk from 1925 to 1928. The progressive jazz records that he heard in this period included the first made by the pianists Duke Ellington and Earl Hines. Dance was later to become close to both of them. He wrote his first essays in the French magazine *Jazz Hot* in 1935 because "so much of what I read about jazz was so ill-informed and so bad" and over the next two decades until he left for the US continued to write, often for col-

lectors' magazines, when his work in the tobacco industry allowed.

The Decca albums, issued on the Felsted label, became classics and with them Dance established a new jazz context that he called Mainstream. The categorisation caught on because it was useful. Dance defined it:

Primarily it is a reference term for the vast body of jazz that was at one time in some danger of losing its identity. Practically it applied to the jazz idiom which developed between the heyday of King Oliver and Jelly Roll Morton on the one hand and that of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie on the other.

In fact Dance regarded Swing as the purview of white musicians like Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw. Mainstream was to encompass the work of black musicians including Duke Ellington, Earl Hines, Count Basie, Coleman Hawkins and Buck Clayton. The music and its roots were similar.

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lectors' magazines, when his work in the tobacco industry allowed.

Dance's writings continued to appear copiously until his death. Over the years he was one of the most influential of authors who, through his friendship with Ellington, Hines, Count Basie and others, became more involved with the music than any other non-instrumentalist.

His chronicles made him one of the leading jazz historians and he had a hand in shaping the direction taken by the music that he loved.

'When you get someone like Stanley in your corner,' said Earl Hines, 'you're a very lucky fellow'

In 1970 Duke Ellington wrote: Stanley is well informed about my activities and those of my associates. He has been a part of our scene for a long time, maybe longer than he cares to remember. He and his wife Helen are the kind of people it is good to have in your corner, the kind of people you don't mind knowing your secrets. In other words they are friends – and you don't have to be careful with friends.

Dance contributed a monthly column, "Lightly and Politely", to the British magazine *Jazz Journal* from 1948 to 1976. In it he used the royal "we". As his fellow columnist I found this an irritating flaw in such a stylish writer and I tackled him about it on a couple of occasions. He

explained only that it lubricated the flow of his prose.

The so-called Bebop Revolution of the mid-Forties was perhaps not the cataclysmic change that critics like Dance made it out to be. It most

concerned the speeding up of musical thought; the apparent changes in the music were not as radical as they at first appeared. But they were more than enough for Dance, who pulled the blinds down at the appearance on the scene of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie and, as far as developments in the music were concerned, kept them down ever after. Additionally, since the best players of the Twenties had been black, Dance believed that this would always be the case.

In 1957 the bandleader Johnny Dankworth created an incident when, appalled by the showmanship and general hysteria of Lionel Hampton at a Royal Festival Hall concert, he shouted from his seat in the audience, "How about playing some jazz?" Dance's support of Hampton gave him the chance to clob a white modernist in passing. He wrote:

What would like to know is whether Dankworth attended the [Stan] Kenton concert. If he did was he heard to say the same question? If not, why not? We sat through the Kenton concert indignant and incredulous without bawling once, because we knew that in the audience there were several hundred jazzers who had come long distances to hear the noise.

Kenton's music had far more depth and cerebral activity than the direct and raw passion of Hampton's, and hindsight suggests that Dance's assessment was diametrically wrong. However, a paragraph from him in the current edition of *Jazz Times* suggests that it never changed:

I liked Stan Kenton personally, but I've only found his music too grabby and hectic to like. It was a period when he made a Wagner album. Patriotic ambitions having cost me friends and relatives in two world wars, I was doubly prejudiced against such contraband ventures.

Later, when Dance travelled with Duke Ellington, closer to him than anyone else as he helped him with day-to-day matters and wrote continuously about the band's activities, the trumpeter Buck Clayton said to me, "Every time that Duke wanted a pee, Stanley was there to mix it up for him."

In 1964, when Earl Hines's career was at a low ebb, Dance persuaded some promoters to support three concerts by the pianist at the Little Theatre in New York. They were sensational success and as a result Hines, with Dance's support, resumed his rightful place at the head of the jazz pantheon. "I always say I'm an amateur manager," said Duke, but his guidance of Hines and Ellington was faultless. He was largely responsible for the surge of recordings by the two men, and contributed informed and enlightening notes to their albums. He had already won a Grammy Award in 1963 for his liner notes to the record set *The Ellington Era*.

His output of articles and books was breathtaking in size. Already a contributor to *Down Beat*, *Metro-ome*, the *New York Herald Tribune* and *Saturday Review*, he began to collect together his pieces in books such as *The World of Duke Ellington* (1974), *The World of Ellington* (1977), *The World of Count Basie* (1980), *The Night People* (1971), about the jazz trumpeter Dicky Wells, and *Those Swinging Years* (the autobiography

of Charlie Burnett, which Dance helped to write, 1984). He won the Ascap-Deems Taylor Award in 1979 for his book *Duke Ellington in Person: an intimate memoir*, on which he had collaborated with Ellington's son Mercer. He had probably also been responsible for writing Duke Ellington's autobiography *Music is My Mistress*.

He wrote for the *American Jazz Times* from 1980 until his death, being in charge of the book review section. Many of the reviews were his own and because he was so well-informed, and because his writing style remained so vivid, it was not possible to detect any deterioration



David Redfern

in his skills. He was as eloquent as ever when he joined me for a BBC Radio programme last year. His love of his music and his insights into it shone through: he would have been an excellent broadcaster had he turned his mind to it.

"When you get somebody like Stanley in your corner" said Earl Hines, "you're a very lucky fellow."

STEVE VOCE

Stanley Frank Dance, writer and record producer: born Braintree, Essex 15 September 1910; married 1947 Helen Oakley (two sons, two daughters); died Rancho Bernardo, California 23 February 1999.

We used to aspire to enjoying high art, however difficult. Were we fooling ourselves, or have audiences got lazy? By John Walsh

How low can we go?

Kids today, they've got no respect. If you could reduce the whole baggy arguments about whether or not Western culture is "dumbing down" to a single proposition, it would be this ancient whinge. Whether it's the young at fault, or the teachers who have allowed them to get this way, somewhere along the line people stopped respecting the high arts.

There used to be a cultural divide between the classes, or so we grew up believing. There were nob and groundlings, and their levels of appreciation of the arts were quite different. The nob in Shakespeare's day with performed kerchiefs applied to their fastidious noses, understood the classical dramatic traditions from which *Hamlet*, or *The Merchant of Venice*, or *A Winter's Tale*, derived, and nodded approvingly at the poetry, while the groundlings went along for the love scenes, the jokes, the fights, the pathos and the costumes. The arts divide continued right up to this century: on television, ITV gave the masses what they wanted, BBC1 tried to instruct and entertain, BBC2 was for the specialist intellectual.

Classical music was to be appreciated only by a finite number of posh adherents, who knew the Koenig numbers of all Mozart's symphonies, and wore tuxedos to concerts at the Wigmore Hall. The middle classes might enjoy Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, or Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony - these might be canonical works, but we liked them only for the tunes. Far beyond lay Bruckner and Shoenberg, and you needed a degree in composition and a special sonic apparatus to appreciate them. Some things, we were taught, would always be available only to the travellasters in Culture Canyon.

Same with art. Ordinary people might consume safe hits of the old masters. *The Haywain*, the im-

pressionistic poppy fields and fat bathers in feathery pastels. The working classes seemed content with Tretchikoff's *Dying Swan* or the paintings of galloping elephants you could buy in Woolworths. But there was a higher level where people paid fortunes for horrible daubs by Pollock, or boring religious scenes by Tintoretto, and you couldn't fathom why they were supposed to be good. Likewise you could read bits of Ezra Pound's *Canos*, Spencer's *Poetry Queen*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Nabokov's *Ada* and Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, but make neither head nor tail of them.

The odd thing was, we didn't mind. We accepted that some things were beyond us and might not be, unless we tried a little harder. We deferred to the notion that the Inner Sanctums of art and literature were beyond the reach of ordinary "entertainment", and that it took concentration, intelligence, a willingness to learn and a little humility to appreciate the best. But we aspired to it. We hoped we'd get there one day.

It was all about self-education. In classical music, you start with *The Blue Danube*, go on to Tchaikovsky's violin concertos, then to Beethoven's Ninth, then all the others, then to Schubert, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Chopin, Satie... You still had a long way to go before you'd get into *Tristan und Isolde*, but you might just manage it eventually.

We learnt to dread the word "philistine", partly because we were afraid the word might apply to us. When I worked as a hospital porter at 18, I was a pre-university Niles Crane, whimpering with distaste at the prosaic responses of my fellow porters. One morning, Tim, the Millwall fan with the funny eye, said he'd been to see *Death in Venice*. "File of crap," he commented. "What was it about? Muffing. This bloke, right? 'E goes to Venice, right? 'E wanders about. And he dies. That's it. Oh yeah - and 'e's a poof'." Dear God, I



Death in Venice: separates the precious young men from the Millwall boys

thought Goliath wasn't the biggest of them. But I was uncomfortably aware that, though I knew more than Tim what the film was about, I'd found Mann's book almost unreadably stodgy. I liked the movie - so did that make me just a sucker for pretty pictures on sunny beaches?

What has changed in the last few years is our sense of the *artistos* and our relation to it, our worries about it. That's where the culture has dumbed down - in being content with so little, with the available, the half-understood, the "relevant". Instead of a collective sense of appreciation, sanctioned by time, tradition and the respect of previous generations, we've seen the rise of caviling subjectivism, in which the opinions of the individual are given the same weight as those of the majority.

In the universities of Great Britain, enshrined in the equal opportunities and harassment policies of many students unions, is the dictat that staff and students should be "protected" from anything that might have a "negative emotional impact" upon them. Writing in *The Spectator* a fortnight ago, Jennie Bristow reported how this "offensiveness" could apply to the syllabus, and instanced an English Literature seminar on Conrad's *Lord Jim*. One student, an American, said she was personally offended by Conrad's views of women; and that she could therefore not study him. Such fu-

ous interventions now appear all over the place. A friend who teaches at Geneva University was told by several students that they were "uncomfortable" studying Shakespeare because of the high prevalence of royalty among his dramatis personae; they couldn't see how all these wayward and warlike kings, these vacillating princes and enterated dukes were "relevant" to their lives. Another friend who teaches a

it", the argument runs, "or I don't get it, it's worthless. I don't want a relationship with something I don't understand, because it upsets me." Warren Zevon wrote a song called "Art's That Pretty At All", surely the only extant pop song about philistinism, in which the sceptical narrator goes to the Louvre, inspects the Mona Lisa, discovers it's not all that wonderful, and "Then I hurt myself against the wall". Because I'd rather feel bad than not feel anything at all..." In place of feeling bad or feeling nothing, there's now the culture of circumambience, in which people consume art secondhand. They need not look at the pictures, listen to the music, read the book, attend the play or see the film, because they get all they need from the media chatter about the author/painter/director's life, reputation, habits, dental operation, sex life, and likelihood to win a prize.

The simplistic explanation has taken over from more considered responses. Hence the rise in popularity of installation art. Once you've grasped the "concept" of Damien Hirst's medicine cabinet, or Tracy Emin's tent, you've got the whole thing. Even Princess Diana could understand the exhibits at the Serpentine Gallery and amaze her friends by passing on the "explanation". Even the culture of recommendation has changed: instead of being influenced to buy a new book

by the enthusiasm of a trusted reviewer, readers are more likely to be influenced by prizes. If it won the Booker, the Whitbread, the W H Smith, the Forward, let's see what all the fuss is about.

"Dumbing down" doesn't mean that our children are becoming more stupid. It means that we've lost respect for the best. We have ceased to defer to the idea of a higher Par-

nasus of thought, artistry and feeling; we've chosen to be content with much less.

Without a higher good to defer to, everything becomes relative. With out a hierarchy of brilliance, things cease to be important; things like knowledge for its own sake ("God, what a boff" the kids at my daughter's school will say, at any display of general knowledge), sublimity, verbal intelligence, intellectual curiosity and the ability to follow the thought-flow in the novels of Lawrence or Woolf or Henry James. They may not be much to lose, when compared to the infotech wonders of "hyper-text", but the world will be a rather two-dimensional place without them.

Tomorrow in *Dumb Britannia*, Judith Judd considers education; Thursday, Thomas Sudcliffe on television; Friday, Barney Hoskyns on pop culture; Saturday, David Lister draws conclusions



"Dumbing down suggests the society has moved into a genuine mass democracy. Up until the advent of the Thatcher era, we lived in a very much guided democracy, governed by a highly sophisticated political, moral and social elite... Thatcher heralded the destruction of this, and Blair's government has signified how culture has finally caught up with elitism. The yobs have caught up with the snobs... This is not particularly a result of human wickedness, it simply happened and we have to live with it." Dr David Starkey, historian, writer, broadcaster



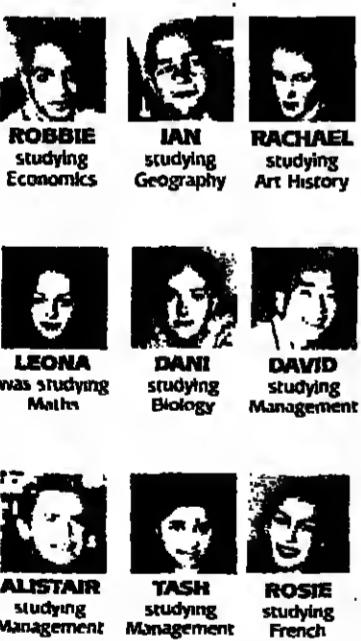
"Dumbing down is the surrender of cultural life to its lowest common denominator. It suggests a lowering of our sights so that we have come to lack any sense of vision. Mass culture nowadays be-littles what is truly challenging by subscribing to what is neither here nor there." Mark Ryan, conference director, Culture Wars (Riverside Studios, London W8, 5-7 March)



"Dumbing down is about sound-bites, photo-bites and quick-fixes." Lisa Appignanesi, author

Glad to be gay, just for a day, but don't tell Dad

Queer as students? The irresistible lure of television draws the boys into startling new territory. By Cayte Williams



ROBBIE, ALISTAIR and David are enjoying a hit of TV stardom. Four months ago they were singled out by a Channel Four film crew and were asked to be extras in *Queer As Folk*, the new drama about gay life in Manchester.

Last week they watched the programme, including sex scenes which left little to the imagination. "It was very explicit," says Dave, rather sheepishly. "I was a bit shocked when I saw it. I thought there would be a few kissing scenes but it was nothing like that. I'm also a bit concerned about my dad. I know he watched it and he hasn't phoned me since. I

told everyone we were in it. Still, it was good money. We were paid £150 for two nights of walking up and down the street. The only hitch was that they tried to make Robbie wear this very tight top and he refused, so we wore our own clothes."

Robbie avoided any family embarrassment. "I meant to ask them to tape it for me, but I forgot to tell them and I don't think I'm going to now. I think they might be a bit shocked. It's good that the programme is dealing with the gay lifestyle, but it's trying to make it a bit too shocking. There were gay sex scenes throughout it and I thought, oh my gosh, that was a

hit unnecessary. "But I'm glad I did it, really," he adds. "My friends have been quite cool about it. They think it's really funny, and I think they're quite impressed.

"They've asked me if I would have done it if I'd known how explicit it was going to be, and I said yes - you might never get the chance to do it again."

Meanwhile, after months of conflict with the landlord (she said work needed doing, he said it didn't), Rachael moved out of the house last week with Dani. Their arguments with the house's owner culminated in visits from an environmental health officer and the removal

THIS STUDENT LIFE



SPRING TERM,
WEEK 8 AT THE
MANCHESTER
STUDENT HOUSE

of their kitchen. Now the landlord has boarded up the top-floor flat where the two girls lived and doesn't plan to rent it out again. "But he's agreed to keep the rent the same for us," says Ian with a shrug. Rachael and Dani never really took to the dynamics of a shared house, and have moved into a comfortable two-bedroom flat in a smarter part of town. When they had a kitchen, they spent most of their time on the top floor away from the communal student squalor. And when they didn't, they spent most of their time away from the house.

The other girls in the house, Leona, Tasha and Rosie, are going to miss them. "It's been war lately," says Rosie. "That kitchen has been a mess since before Christmas, and it was the boys who made all the mess, but they've been trying to get us to do it."

"The boys' bathroom downstairs is disgusting dirty," says Leona. "There are slugs in there." The girls are planning on visiting Rachael and Dani frequently - at least for a decent wash. But the boys may be looking for new housemates before long.

"We want to get out of this dirty, run-down house whenever we can."

CLASSIFIED

Legal Notices

Unusual Gifts

A NEWSPAPER for that special date. 1942-1999, more than a million words of the best of the year. For a viewing or as the creation of the Showbiz section, will be held at the Royal Festival Hall, London, on Saturday 27 March 1999 at 12.30pm. Tickets £10.00. To book, call 0181 780 5100. For more details, see page 111 of this issue.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDITIONS
TO THE PUBLIC
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE
SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS
INTENDS TO HOLD A MEETING ON THE
SUBJECT OF THE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM ON THE
25TH MARCH 1999 AT 12.30PM
IN THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL,
LONDON, ENGLAND.

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By John Walsh



...down suggests that he has moved into a more democratic and the advent of the Thatcher era, we lived in a guided democracy by a highly sophisticated, moral and... Thatcher heralded the destruction of the... and... has... finally... with... The... caught up with the... is not particularly... of human... happened... to live with it... *John Walsh, Sunday, BBC Radio 4*

Bacon: the rough guide

He always denied their existence. But do the drawings really dispel the myth of his paintings' spontaneity? By Tom Lubbock

Because something has been kept secret, needn't mean it holds a secret. Francis Bacon always said that he never drew, he only painted. But since his death in 1992 a lot of pictures have turned up that undermine this claim. Their value and status are still disputable and the smallish show at the Tate Gallery, *Francis Bacon: Works on Paper*, is, in some ways, premature. Still, the topic is obviously of note to anyone interested in Bacon, and this glimpse is worth catching. What sort of revelation it offers is another matter.

The drawings at the Tate are dated to about 1957-61. A good moment: Bacon was about 50 years old and - a late beginner - on the brink of what is now seen as his mature style. There are pencil sketches on paper, and oil-paint sketches on paper, and Eiro sketches on paper. There are also a couple of examples of his drawings over photographs, where Bacon has taken a photo-reproduction from a book or a magazine and worked over it in paint, sometimes completely obliterating it, sometimes altering it only slightly.

Now, there's nothing here that could be called a finished drawing. Almost all of them are figure studies, quite loose sketches, generally involved with working out some body pose or - if that sounds too anatomically correct - some body shape. Some of them can be related, and quite closely, to paintings; some not. And though it would be presumptuous to say that they're just what you would expect Bacon's drawings to look like, I don't think anyone seeing them will get a big surprise, or say "wow, so that's how he drew".

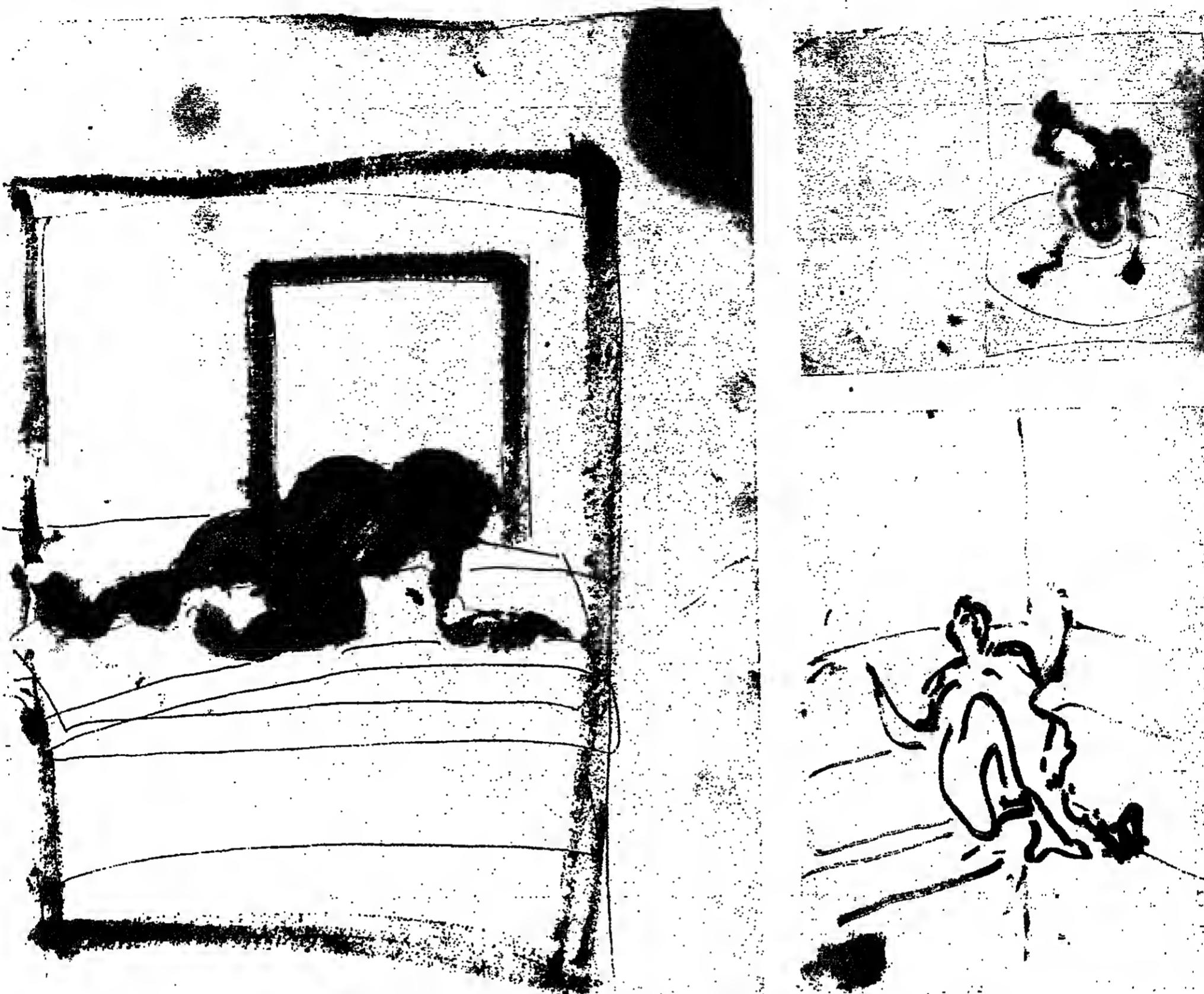
No. They figure. And as for the altered photos - well, they're interesting, because they show Bacon disrupting an existing image, and in his paintings he's often disrupting his own images - but they're almost not news. We know from photos of his studio and his interview with David Sylvester that he worked from, and among, torn-out and trampled-on photos - Eisenstein film stills, Muybridge motion studies, fine-art reproductions, natural history shots. The fact that he worked on them, too, doesn't seem such a big difference.

I don't say these drawings lack value or enlightenment. They're often graceful in the way that Bacon himself was graceful. They stress the cartoonish side of his art, which is always worth stressing. But I do say: if we'd known them all along, I don't think we'd now give them a lot of attention. And if you're looking for revelations, you have to see them in quite another way.

You may remember a TV programme on Channel 4 last year about a large haul of these drawings-over-photos, in the possession of a friend of the artist. They're not in this show. But these, it was said, the Tate had at one point taken an interest in - they were offered without charge, apparently - but then the gallery got cold feet, and the affair was made to sound mysterious and conspiratorial, as if the Tate wanted to hush up the very existence of these pictures.

The problem, I gather, is that another, non-Bacon hand had been detected in the pictures, and that made them dodgy. But now it's thought possible that this other hand belonged to Bacon's boyfriend of the time, and that the drawings aren't so much inauthentic as collaborative. Whatever value that might give them, it seems likely that many visitors will have seen the programme, and could do with more information here. All we get is a tiny mention in the catalogue - "substantial quantities of comparable material have recently been attributed to the artist" - a briskness that suggests the issue remains tricky.

The TV programme, of course, and others, too, have gone on to suggest that



Rough and ready: clockwise from main picture, 'Pink Crawling Figure', 'Figure with Foot in Hand' and 'Fallen Figure'

the existence of any Bacon drawings is since then tricky, it's damned awkward. It wasn't just that the old dog had been caught telling lies. No one could be surprised or shocked by that, as such. And it's not that Bacon mightn't have had good reasons for keeping his drawings quiet. As David Sylvester says in his preface, he probably didn't think they were much good in themselves, and he didn't want to encourage an irrelevant interest in his creative process, as opposed to his paintings.

Fine. But he may have had bad reasons, too. And what's suggested is that discovery of these drawings touches his paintings very damagingly. By denying them, Bacon was really trying to deny the fact that he had a creative process at all. For didn't he always claim to work in an entirely unplanned and quasi-random manner? And

doesn't the power of his art involve a sense of this spontaneity? But these studies and try-outs sink that story - and expose the painting as a kind of con. That's the dreadful secret they reveal.

Not quite. But it is a slightly difficult issue. I think the right answer goes like this. The above line of thought is quite wrong: the existence of the drawings damages the painting not at all. But on the other hand, Bacon himself probably believed something rather like that, and it was a reason for him to deny his drawings. After all, the Bacon myth, partly self-constructed, tends to picture the artist as fighting drunk, flinging himself and several pots of paint at the canvas. There follows a great Andy Capp-style dust-up, a cloud of energy with hands, brushes, rags, and sponges flying everywhere. At the end of it all, things

settle, and there on the canvas is the image - the skid-mark of the impact, so to speak. What I'm getting at is that Bacon did half-want to elide the act of painting. There are all those vivid and memorable phrases in the interviews with Sylvester - about making images straight on his nervous system, or leaving a trail like a small leaf's slime, or making images that didn't look as though they'd been interfered with. They don't all say the same thing, but the general idea is of images that emanate, materialise, just happen - sort of spurge themselves out of him.

And the thing is, you can half-believe it, too. Bacon's images do have paint skid-mark aspects, and the bodies he depicts have lost their boundaries and they blend into those skid-marks; and then you can imaginatively transfer this feeling on to the

painter's own body and its contact with the canvas. This, indeed, is the illusion the paintings often achieve. Bacon is careful to conceal any traces of too deliberate paint-work - and conceals them in the same spirit as he concealed his drawing.

But remember; it is an illusion, and he is careful. True, the paintings have randomly thrown splats of paint in them, and wild strokes, but they are incorporated very cunningly. This spontaneity is, unavoidably, a matter of work. And the existence of drawn studies should be no more of a revelation to us than the "revelation" that Bacon was an extremely skillful operator.

If you really wanted a posthumous revelation about Bacon's art, that would be its subject: Bacon's skills in operation, and operating in one particular area. For there's one notable omission from the Tate's drawings. There are body studies, but there are no head or face studies. I suppose half Bacon's fame rests on what he did to heads and faces. Who wouldn't like to see how that was done? So the revelation I'm imagining is a hitherto undiscovered reel of film, close up on the middle of a Bacon canvas, showing the artist doing his first strokes, his solid modelling of forms and then his blur-smears, dissolves and sudden fade-outs, his chancy, flung blots and splashes and his seamless blending of them into the image, his finishing touches Bacon-wise. I can't think of a more valuable or curious document. There's almost certainly no such thing. But you never know.

Francis Bacon: Works on Paper, Tate Gallery, Millbank, London SW1 (0171-877 8000). Daily to 2 May, admission free.

Material witness

For George Kennethson sculpting in stone was like 'walking on a tightrope'. But his mastery of the medium kept him faithful, despite critical neglect. By Lesley Jackson

THE IRONY of George Kennethson's career as a sculptor was that, just at the point when he reached artistic maturity, his material - stone - went out of fashion. By the Fifties, Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth had begun to work in bronze, and the new generation of British sculptors - Chadwick, Meadows, Butler, Paolozzi *et al.* - worked almost exclusively in metal. The revival of direct stone carving in the Twenties and Thirties, although crucially important in the history of English sculpture, was all too brief.

Even since the Second World War, the art world has become increasingly faddish. If an artist is even slightly out of sync with the latest trend, he or she is likely to be ignored. Such has been Kennethson's fate, although a new exhibition hopefully signals a turning-point.

Born in Richmond in 1910, Kennethson studied at the Royal Academy from 1933 to 1934. Although by this date the Modern Movement was well under way, teaching at the RA was still highly traditional. While appreciating the achievements of the Old Masters, Michelangelo in par-

ticular, Kennethson was equally interested in modern art, an appetite fuelled by exhibitions and the books of Herbert Read. Cézanne was a great hero, and among his contemporaries he particularly admired the stone carvings of Henry Moore.

Like many artists of the period, he became fascinated by African sculpture, while closer to home,

sham and Purbeck were among his favourites, along with English alabaster. Nature provided lifelong inspiration, although, in his words, he was "enthralled by everything in the visual world".

His sculptures fall into two main groups, figures and landscapes, the latter expressed through abstract forms. The rhythms of the sea, and

to take risks. Carving in stone is the riskiest medium of all, because instead of adding the artist creates by subtracting: the margins between success and failure are a matter of millimetres. "Being a sculptor," he said, "is like walking on a tightrope. You can fall off at any minute."

Because of the vagaries of fashion, his work was mostly overlooked, except by an independent-minded few. Among these was Jim Ede, the founder of the remarkable collection at Kettle's Yard in Cambridge. He and Kennethson became great friends, and it was Ede who introduced him to the sculpture of Gaudier-Brzeska. As a result, Kettle's Yard (as well as the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art) is one of the few public collections in which Kennethson's work is represented.

Another person who appreciated his talents was the Sloane Street gallery-owner Madeline Ponsonby (now known as Madeline Beaumont), whose New Art Centre has flown the flag for British sculpture since the Sixties. The New Art Centre was one of the few galleries to show Kennethson's sculpture

In the great humanist tradition, he believed art could bring wisdom and understanding

medieval stone carvings fired his imagination. All these influences would later resurface in his sculpture. Although he excelled at drawing, it was sculpture he pursued on leaving the RA. On settling at Uffington in Berkshire, near the Vale of the White Horse, he quickly achieved mastery over stone.

With his notebook full of dimensions for the sculptures he had in mind, he would travel to quarries far and wide to select choice pieces. Limestones such as Hornton, Clip-

the way it carved out the cliffs and the rocks on the coastline, fired his imagination. He was equally fascinated by people, the contours and rhythms of their features, and the relationship between these elements, which is why his figures are stylised rather than particular.

Kennethson worked in the great humanist tradition. Through art, he believed man could arrive at greater wisdom and understanding. He believed that it was the artist's duty to dig for truth and, above all,



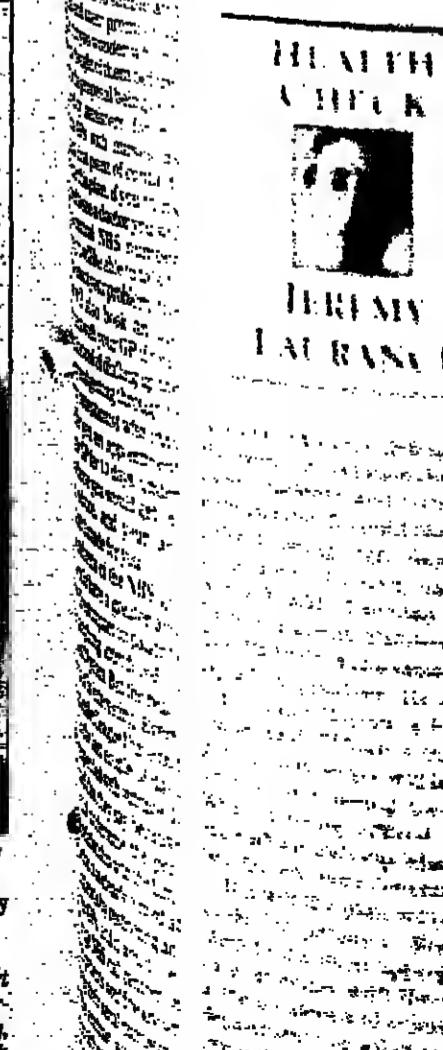
during this period, and although it eventually closed in 1993, it has now risen, phoenix-like, in a new location - Roche Court, near Salisbury - with a beautiful, purpose-designed sculpture gallery created by Munkenbeck and Marshall.



Appropriately, it is at Roche Court that an exhibition of Kennethson's work can now be seen, a choice selection of both figurative and abstract works spanning his career. Having failed to appreciate his work, and the patronage of Jim Ede, first time

around, if the art world has any sense it will take notice now.

George Kennethson, the New Art Centre, Roche Court Sculpture Garden, East Winterslow, Salisbury, Wiltshire, 01980 682204. To 31 March



HEALTH

pm Lubbock



Since Hoffman developed it, numerous uses for aspirin have come to light

Drug of the century

In an age of super-pills, the best medicine of all is also one of the oldest. By Jeremy Laurance

Most people have a potent anti-cancer agent in the medicine cabinet at home, though few know it. They keep a heart drug at the back of the sock drawer, a fertility promoter buried in their handbag and a cognitive enhancer standing next to the salt pot in the kitchen.

The drug is aspirin, a chemical entity for which new uses are still coming to light 100 years after it was discovered. We know, of course, that it reduces aches and pains, and eases fevers in diseases such as flu. It is now also a standard treatment for heart attacks – take one immediately after calling 999. Tens of thousands of lives could be saved if this simple fact were better known.

It is being tested as a preventive agent against Alzheimer's disease, it has been shown to reduce the risk of stroke, and it can ward off cancer. Those who take it regularly have a 40 per cent reduced risk of dying of cancer of the oesophagus, stomach and bowel. Research also suggests it is effective against herpes and prostate cancer.

Aspirin can fairly claim to be the 20th century's broadest-spectrum medicine – the closest we have come to a miracle drug. Bayer, the German company that discovered it, has earmarked Monday 8 March as the official birthday, though there is some dispute about exactly when the centenary falls.

The company plans to wrap a 400-ft tower at its headquarters in Leverkusen, with the help of 50 Alpine mountaineers, to create the world's largest aspirin pack and earn itself a place in the *Guinness Book of Records*.

Aspirin is derived from the salicin found in willow bark, and records date from 400BC, when Hippocrates recommended willow bark infusions to ease labour pains. Interest was revived in 1753 by the Reverend Edward Stone who was tempted to chew on the bark of the white willow while walking in a field near Chipping Norton. He may have been influenced by an old theory of medicines known as the *Doctrine of Signatures*. This held that the cure to a disease might be found in the same place as the cause. Fevers were believed to be aggravated by damp, and willows flourished in damp places.

Chewing the bark, Stone noticed that it tasted bitter; like "Jesus' bark", from a Peruvian tree, which was used as a painkiller and which we now know to contain quinine. He made an infusion of the willow bark and gave it to 50 people suffering from fever. It proved effective and Stone reported his results to the president of the Royal Society.

It was not until 1897 that Felix Hoffman, a German chemist working for Bayer, found a way to reduce the side-effects of salicylic acid, the active ingredient of willow bark, which included severe irritation of mouth, oesophagus and

Aspirin can fairly claim to be the closest we have to a miracle drug

stomach, by combining it with an acetyl group to make aspirin. Despite this advance, the new drug was dismissed by Heinrich Besser, the head of Bayer's Pharmacological Institute, as "typical Berlin hot air". Bayer's chairman intervened, after seeing the result of laboratory tests, and the rest is history.

Seventies and the newer drug now has 90 per cent of the analgesics market. But aspirin was about to undergo a renaissance that would lift it into a different class. Dr John Vane of the Royal College of Surgeons unlocked the secret of aspirin's mechanism, and opened up a vista of new therapeutic

which trigger pain signals to the brain. Prostaglandins are involved in many diseases. In heart disease, a prostaglandin-like substance called thromboxane promotes clotting. A single daily aspirin inhibits production of thromboxane, effectively reducing the blood's tendency to form clots, and cuts by a third the incidence of heart attacks in those at risk.

Aspirin's anti-inflammatory properties help the pain of arthritis and it was a chance observation that sufferers who took it had a lower incidence of Alzheimer's disease, which suggested the drug might have a protective effect on the brain. Now a 10-year trial of 400 men is about to start in Cardiff, run by the Medical Research Council, in which half will be given

100mg of aspirin and half a placebo to see whether the drug can reduce Alzheimer's.

Aspirin can reduce the risk of stroke and cuts the incidence of pre-eclampsia, dangerous condition in pregnancy that can threaten the lives of mother and baby. In women undergoing *in-vitro* fertilisation who have an immune system problem caused by raised levels of antiphospholipid antibodies, a daily aspirin more than doubles their chance of getting pregnant.

Aspirin today has a slightly dowdy image, partly because it is cheap and has been with us for so long. But it has shown a repeated capacity to surprise over the last 100 years. It is a safe bet that the party is not over for this remarkable drug.

Dial for a diagnosis

SOME IDEAS are so simple and radical, and their promise so great, that you wonder why no one has thought of them before. Such is the proposal being considered by ministers for replacing GPs with nurses as patients' first point of contact.

Under this plan, if you need to see a doctor you will call a central NHS number where you will be able to talk to a nurse about your problem: the nurse will also book an appointment with your GP if necessary. Instead of dialling up the surgery and getting through to a frosty receptionist who may not offer you an appointment with the GP for 10 days, under this scheme you would get instant advice, and your appointment made for you.

As reforms of the NHS go, this would have a greater and more direct impact on patients than anything introduced in the last 20 years. But the reaction to it is interesting. Every friend and colleague I have put it to in the last couple of days has responded with outrage. It is a bad idea, they say, because it would undermine the personal relationship with the family doctor; it is clearly aimed at cutting costs by restricting access to GPs, and it would create huge NHS call centres in which patients would be known only by their serial numbers.

The contrast with the reaction of the professionals was striking. The British Medical

HEALTH CHECK



JEREMY LAURANCE

Association, fierce defender of the personal relationship between patients and GPs, was enthusiastic. It could result in patients being seen "more appropriately" by GPs, said Dr Simon Fraard, chairman of the Doctor Patient Partnership. The Patients Association was equally supportive. Its chairman, Claire Rayner, a former nurse, said: "There is no suggestion that people will be prevented from seeing their GP. What is being offered is instant advice and help, which will be infinitely more convenient."

But will the plan serve as a guide for patients, directing them to the most appropriate care (at home, with the GP or at the accident and emergency department), or will it in effect prevent them from obtaining the treatment they want?

The pilot scheme, to be run in Northumberland, will test how this is perceived. The NHS

Direct helpline service, on which it will be based, has proved hugely successful since its launch last year, but it is voluntary, running in parallel with the GP and hospital service.

NHS Direct nurses deal with telephone queries from patients following lists of questions drawn up by specialists. A survey has shown that 97 per cent of callers were satisfied, yet 40 per cent of them were advised to do something less than they had planned before they called, such as going to bed with a hot drink instead of calling out the GP. Twenty per cent were urged to do something more than they had planned.

Both the BMA and the Patients' Association are clear that free access to GPs on demand must be preserved. If that can be guaranteed, there could still be substantial savings for the NHS from the 40 per cent of people who are seeking only the reassurance they need to look after themselves at home.

The introduction of telephone banking was resisted by those who said it meant the end of a personal service. For patients with personal difficulties or chronic conditions who see their GPs regularly, advice from a nurse may not be what they want or need. But for those with unexplained clinical symptoms seeking advice, I suspect that telephone medical care will prove as popular as banking by remote control.

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MEDIA

Associated's launch of *Metro*, available free at Underground stations, is an important test. By Paul McCann

THE WORD ON THE STREET



IT IS hard to believe that the BBC thinks it would be sued for libel by *Guardian* editor Alan Rusbridger – after all, he's so often been on the receiving end himself – so why did it edit out the funniest moment from the *What the Papers Say* Awards on Friday? As Mr Rusbridger went up to receive the Scoop of the Year award for its Peter Mandelson home loan story, a loud Yorkshire harrumphing could be heard from the audience. The cameras even focused in on the harrumphing. Paul Routledge, sitting next to the ex-spin doctor, Charlie Whelan, but cut was his audible heckle as Rusbridger departed the stage with his heavy prize: "You ought to get six months for larceny," shouted Mr Routledge, showing that despite *Mirror* editor Piers Morgan's peace-making with Rusbridger, *The Mirror's* political commentator still believes the Mandelson story was whipped from his book.

THERE IS no greater illustration of the media's ability to make much out of little than to compare the fuss about Routledge's book with the number of copies it has actually sold. According to *Book Track*, it managed 982 copies up to 20 February. It has had another 10 days since then, so it may have blazed a trail into four figures by now.

NICE TO know that some newspaper headline writers remain as unreconstructed as ever: "Gordon Brown's former girlfriend fights for her life" was the *Mail on Sunday's* headline over its Sheena McDonald story. Ms McDonald has hosted *Channel 4 News*, *Right to Reply*, and *The Week in Westminster*, and is one of Britain's most respected political broadcasters. But being a woman, none of that is as important in defining her headline status as a relationship 20 years ago.

The sight of Paul Dacre, editor-in-chief of Associated Newspapers, exploding with the fury of a revivalist preacher and ripping page proofs to shreds is a common one on the newsroom floor of the *Daily Mail*.

So when it happened three weeks ago few people took much notice. The next day's *Mail* was being remade in its usual way, it seemed. In fact, standing in the middle of the newsroom for all to see, Dacre was ripping up a dummy issue of *Metro*, Associated Newspapers' first newspaper launch for 17 years.

The destruction of the dummy effectively marked the end for Kim Chapman, formerly editor of the *Reading Post*, who arrived to edit *Metro* only last November. She was replaced as editor and offered the post of *Metro's* publisher, which she turned down, and then Dacre brought in some of his most trusted lieutenants from the *Daily Mail* to turn the paper around in time for its launch on 9 March. Alistair Sinclair, Dacre's deputy on the *Mail*, was given overall control of the project and Ian MacGregor, associate editor (news) and a rising star at the *Mail*, replaced Chapman as editor. Other executives drafted in from the *Mail* include Tim Jotischky, the paper's executive news editor.

What Chapman had failed to understand is that *Metro* is very much more than just a free regional newspaper for London.

Associated has highly successful newspapers, but it is still dependent on just three national titles. The cash generated by the *Daily Mail*, *The Mail on Sunday* and *Evening Standard* has not been used for company expansion, except for a few excursions into cable and new media. With the launch of *Metro*, Associated hopes to create a blueprint for a series of local free newspapers for Manchester, Newcastle and, perhaps, even New York.

It also gives it another way to tackle what Associated calls "the problem in London". Despite massive investment in new sections and price-cutting, sales of the *Evening Standard* are stubbornly stagnant. Associated needs *Metro* to protect its position in London from rivals who may be tempted by the same freshsheet idea.

The idea is not original. According to legend, the new Lord Rothermere, then known as humbug Jonathan Harmsworth and deputy managing director of the *Evening Standard*, was in Stockholm on a bitterly cold day when he couldn't get a taxi, so he jumped on to a tram. There he saw all the other passengers reading a newspaper that came from a display bin on the tram.

The paper was produced by Sweden's Modern Times Group, so Associated head-hunted one of its directors, Thomas Grahl, to bring the idea to London. Modern Times was planning its own launch in London but, crucially, Associated Newspapers got to London Underground first. It signed an exclusive 10-year contract that promises the Under-



Most people travelling on the tube are relatively upmarket and young – just the kind of readers *'Metro'* is looking for. Kim Chapman (top right) was replaced as editor by Paul Dacre (middle). Associated's editor-in-chief took firm control of Lord Rothermere's project (bottom). UPPA/Reading Evening Post/Gavin Kent

ground about £1.5m a year if the paper is a success. It also gets a page a day in the newspaper to promote its services and apologise for signal failures on the Northern Line.

In return, Associated gets to place 1,000 newspaper bins in 261 stations on the Underground. It has bought access to many of the 2.7 million passenger journeys made every day on the Tube. Most of the people making those journeys are relatively upmarket and young – people who will be attractive to the advertisers Associated hopes will spend £13m a year on ads in *Metro*. As it tours advertising agencies, *Metro's* sales team is offering to refund advertisers' money if it does not hit a 90 per cent pick-up rate for its 350,000 print run.

The paper hopes to cash in not only on the arts and entertainment classified advertising that drives the *Standard*, but also on the relative dearth of colour display advertising sites in newspapers. Recent increases in production quality have driven many advertisers to demand colour pages in newspapers for their ads. Media buyers despair at the lack of availability of colour

pages to run their campaigns, so the all-colour *Metro* hopes to mop up some of this demand.

The media buyers who have seen the new dummies of *Metro* believe its quality means that it will destroy the *Evening Standard*. Yet Associated seems to have been forced to do it because it was terrified someone else would sign up the Underground.

In the world of fragmenting

transport get underway, the Underground can only become more attractive. The number of journeys on the Underground have increased by nearly 70 per cent since the early Eighties, and Associated has gambled that someone was eventually going to go for that audience.

What was wrong with Chapman's dummy *Metro* was that it looked like a regional newspaper – hardly surprising, given that it is to be a re-

Weekend section alone costs £13m a year; *Metro's* budget is less than £1m a year for a five-day operation.

The *Mail's* newsmen have quickly to turn *Metro* into what Dacre wants – a 40-page print version of *GMTV*, celebrity-heavy, middle-market and glamorous. It will be stapled to make it easy to read on the Tube, and its bite-sized stories should mean you can read all you want of it on a 20-minute journey.

previous one. And then there is the question of the *Evening Standard*.

Ironically, London already had a *"Metro"* newspaper and it was published by Associated. For *"Metro"* was the name that appeared in the top right-hand corner of the first edition of the *Evening Standard* – an edition that was on the streets at 9am. It has now been renamed *"News Extra"*. But still the *Standard* is worried. There is no question that Associated might want deliberately to damage its London paper but given the frosty attitude that reportedly exists between Dacre and Max Hastings, the *Standard's* editor, there is probably at least some internal politics in Dacre's enthusiasm for the project.

The mighty house of Harmsworth is not going to live or die by the success of an £8m investment in a free newspaper for the Tube, but dynamics are at their shakiest after a succession. Dacre and his favourite sons from the *Daily Mail* back bench have a reputation for excellence. Now they have to prove it once again, so that the new Lord Rothermere can show that the dynasty is safe in his hands.

SWITCH DIGITAL RADIO FOR LONDON

Switch is set to revolutionise your radio listening. Switch investors include national commercial services Talk Radio, Virgin Radio and global radio operator Clear Channel International.

Our initial application to the Radio Authority will be for the first London multiplex in May 1999. Switch will also apply for digital radio licences in other major UK regions.

Switch intends to carry a combination of existing and new programme services that will extend listener and advertiser choice. New services will include speech-based formats such as sport and demographically targeted music services. Switch is also looking to provide a range of data information services.

We are now looking to hear from prospective sound and data programme service providers. To confirm your interest in providing a service or to suggest a format to be considered please write to: Jason Bryant, Development Director, Talk Radio, 76 Oxford Street, London, W1N 0TR. Or e-mail me on jbryant@talk-radio.co.uk.

Closing date March 12th 1999

-make the switch-

guage *FT* and the *Wall Street Journal* have been must-reads for bankers in Frankfurt and a handful of senior people, neither paper is relevant to most managers or investors. Half the *FT's* English-language circulation in Germany is said to be a bulk sale to Lufthansa.

The new launch will be a test for *Handelsblatt*, quintessential organ of German capitalism. They are unlikely to prove a pushover. Its circulation has grown steadily but not spectacularly. Is it complacent in its market or ripe for new competition? Or are there only 150,000 people a day ready to buy a financial paper in Germany?

Pearson's objective is to command a portfolio of euro zone newspapers and web sites, including editions of the *FT* in English and German, *Le Monde* in France, and *Expansion* in Spain. But their start-up in Germany is more testing than the acquisition of established titles in France and Spain, which were simply a matter of establishing the right price. The *FT's* adventure in Germany will be a test of the pink 'un's fitness to rule business news in Euroland as it has in Britain.

FT seeks German readers

ANALYSIS

JONATHAN MILLER

WALDEMAR SCHAEFER, joint editor of the German business daily *Handelsblatt*, did not sound especially nervous yesterday at the news that he would soon be competing against a German-language edition of the *FT*, complete with an English (but German-speaking) editor. He laughed: "Is there space for them? I think they are going to find the competition is very strong."

If anybody yet knows when the new paper will be launched, or even what it will be called, they are not saying. Yesterday, the *FT* finally confirmed the open secret that the German *FT* was a definite runner. The new details are it is to be printed on pink paper, and published in a joint venture with Gruner & Jahr, publisher of the established *Capital* economic and business monthly, and a subsidiary of Bertelsmann, Europe's largest media group; and start-up costs are estimated at DM170m. Schaefer thinks it will cost twice that.

The *FT* and their German allies are entering a torrid market. New publications have been launching in a flurry to attract Germany's expanding new class of equity investors.

who have proven a hungry audience for business news. This year's launches have included Springer's *Euro am Sonntag*, a weekly newspaper, and the German regional press has also been bolstering business news coverage.

But the German *FT* will be the biggest launch so far and a test of both Pearson and Gruner & Jahr's ability to succeed with a testing cross-cultural and media joint venture. The newspaper is expected to be launched alongside a website which will be integrated with *FT.com*, the *Financial Times* Internet channel. It will be edited by Andrew Gowers, former deputy editor of the *FT*. It is expected to include both a strong business report as well as information oriented to investors, although this alone will not distinguish it dramatically from *Handelsblatt*.

The English-language *FT* has been published in Germany for more than a decade. But it still sells only around

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Sexual prudes who decide the bottom line

ONLY THE foolish or the very young are opposed to all kinds of censorship. Parenthood, as I've learned, is a pretty continuous exercise in excision and "bowdlerisation". So we parents tend to look upon censors as our allies in the task of keeping highly profitable muck from overwhelming us. The alternative is the three-year-old, thought to have been happily occupied in front of *Telebabies*, who was discovered eating its Rice Krispies to the accompaniment of Johnny Wadd's impressive ejaculations. Societies that expose kids to pornography are had societies. So, in contrast to my student self, I am in favour of regulation; of bodies like the ITC; of documents like the BBC's producers' guidelines; and of individuals like our own Andreas Whittam Smith. Someone, after

all, has to take a view on what is and what isn't kosher.

And please spare me all the guff about "who are they to tell us what we can and cannot watch?". Civilisations have rules. You don't want rules? Go and live in Chechnya; watch all the porn you like, and open your post to find your mother's ear and a scathing note.

But I draw the line at the Broadcasting Standards Commission. This is the group of worthies collected together to investigate and to rule upon complaints submitted by members of the public. These may concern mistreatment at the hands of programme-makers, or may be about Mr Pootie's horror at being confronted by gay sex on his TV screen. In the latter sense, the BSC resembles nothing so much as a strange cross between *The Daily Telegraph's* letters



Censorship can be a good thing, argues David Aaronovitch, but not when led by public opinion

page and Sam Spade. With its entirely retrospective function, it is an institutional locker of stable doors after the horses have

entered. Its usefulness as an arbiter of decency may be judged by how the BSC handled a complaint about the edition of *This Morning* with Richard and Judy of 16 October 1998. As the Commission succinctly put it in its latest bulletin, "a viewer complained about nudity and simulated sex". Since *This Morning* is transmitted some time between elevenses and lunch time on ITV, it is an

unusual vehicle for explicit material. So what happened? A man took his clothes off (though he apparently "kept his genitals covered"), and assaulted the al fresco weatherman by pretending to throw him into the water. I should explain that this particular forecasters usually stands on a floating polystyrene map of Britain.

A viewer: No genitals. No simulated sex. Not much of a case, you would have thought. Wrong. The commission concluded that, "while the man's actions had not been sexually explicit, the level of nudity had

been unacceptable for the time of transmission". The BSC officially stamped the complaint "upheld".

What on earth was meant by "the level of nudity"? What are "acceptable" nudity levels, anyway? And acceptable to whom? If the man's genitals were invisible, was it his bottom that we were worried about? And who cannot "accept" bare bottoms at 11am? I bet that if they were African bottoms on a safari programme than no one would be complaining. This is provincial prudery of an antique sort. The commissioners are the sort of people who change their swimming costumes under layers of towelling rather than offend an apathetic world with a microsecond's flash of greying public hair.

There are 12 commissioners (of whom nine are women), including two Ladies, a

Reverend, a Dame, a CBE, an OBE and a CB (whatever that is). It would be too easy to take the mickey out of the chairman, Lady Howe. But we may be allowed to specialise that a woman in her sixties, married to an uncharismatic former

chancellor of the exchequer, may be out of touch with those whose hormones still rage, and whose relationships are highly charged. But there again, it is possible, for ought we know, that Howe Towers makes the House of the Rising Sun look restrained.

Anyway, the difficulty with the BSC may be more to do with its function than its membership. It is there to adjudicate on complaints, not to take a proper view of what is good and bad on television. So it is always the letter-writing prudaphobes whose laments are being considered. Very few people put

pen to paper (as well we might) to argue that there is in fact too little proper sex on television, and that "nudity levels" are far too low. There are no erections (even fake), almost no masturbation (despite its universality), and very little good foreplay.

Instead, we get endless programmes on the commodification of sex: male strippers, prostitution, sex shops, pornography, and leering teens on drunken holidays in Corfu. These shows have practically replaced proper current affairs altogether; yet there is barely a whimper from the BSC, which is too busy going on about nudity.

Good censorship, I think, is about leading public opinion, not about reflecting it. Indeed, this rule is true of good anything. It's a lesson that needs relearning.

When Robin Cook was asked about attitudes to Germany on 'Today' it made headlines. But was it a fair question? By Rod Liddle

Sorry to mention the war



Robin Cook's comment on Britain's obsession with the Second World War was blown out of all proportion by the press

Paul Hackett

Guilt has gnawed away, has done its work at night. For a week now, the last thing I've seen before sleep brings its merciful release is the Foreign Secretary hovering above me; hateful, hurt and worse than these things – unquestionably in the right.

He's kept me awake each night and now the time has come to wash my hands, and to speak the truth. It's worth doing so in public because Robin Cook's disagreement with the *Today* programme last week is part of a much wider debate – about news management, spin doctors, interview techniques and even the role of the BBC.

It began with Michael Naumann, the German Culture Minister, suggesting that Britain had made victory in the Second World War its "spiritual core"; that, in effect, we were an obsessed people. On the morning that these comments were reported, amid much outrage in Britain, we were due to talk to the Foreign Secretary about an arguably rather leftish issue – the launch of the Government's "green" foreign policy (or foreign-policy-with-a-green-dimension).

Towards the end of the interview our presenter Nick Robinson, at my request, asked Mr Cook for his views on Herr Naumann's thesis. His response was impeccably anodyne, weighed in at a succinct 11 seconds and was along the lines of "I haven't mentioned the war in meetings with my German counterparts, and I won't do so in future." I'm paraphrasing, but that was the gist – pretty harmless stuff.

The Foreign Office, however, was

seething, in so far as press officers can be said to seethe. Why had we diverged from our arrangement? Why hadn't we cleared the question with the Foreign Secretary? Outrageous behaviour they raged, civilly.

I was inclined to laugh it off. What was the problem, after all? The programme surely must have some leeway when talking to the Foreign Secretary about what was, after all, a subject directly within his ambit. And the response was bland enough.

Eleven seconds, however, is a long time in politics. Three hours later, the news agency wires had headlined the story "Cook Backs Down over Germans!". I felt a brief spasm of contrition, but even then I hadn't expected the following day's coverage.

Next morning, the Foreign Secretary rang himself, in person, to share with me *The Star's* story. He then moved to page one of *The Daily Telegraph*, where his 11-second response had been spread across four columns (plus editorial comment on page 23). *The Mirror*, meanwhile, began its account "Basil Fawlty's catch phrase 'Don't mention the war' became official Government policy yesterday..." Mr Cook was irate, but still remarkably polite.

The galling thing for me was that he had predicted this very outcome the previous day, which I had laughed off as political over-sensitivity. After all, he couldn't possibly have answered the question in a blander, less controversial manner.

I mean, even if Bill Cash was foreign secretary I doubt that he'd talk about the war very often during discussions with his German counterpart. And only then under his breath.

The Foreign Office, however, was

more than simply nothing; he couldn't possibly have answered the question at all without landing himself in hot water. If he'd voiced my own response to Herr Naumann's comments – that we talk about the war just about enough, but that we should do so more loudly and with a thinly veiled aggression when German politicians tell us we shouldn't – then there would be an entertaining diplomatic incident, apologies and the whiff of resignation. There was, simply, nothing he could have said.

All Robin Cook wanted was advance notice of the subjects to be discussed during our interview, not the questions themselves, mind, just the areas of debate. Our response on these occasions is to harrumph and talk about editorial independence, and refuse to enter into negotiations.

But things are changing, and perhaps we should change with them. We talk about public accountability and the right of chal-

lenging programmes such as *Today* and *The World at One* to have access to Government ministers on important issues. At the same time, we are experiencing news management from the Government which is subtler and more successful than at any time I can remember. In a crude sense this Government is

politicians are less frequently made available at the crucial times. We may receive 10 offers of government ministers launching comparatively small-change programmes, which very often they launched six months before; but they are mysteriously absent when accused of a policy U-turn, or involved

and that this allows the Government to draw a line under what would have been a difficult issue. The next time that the minister is made available it may be on a much safer issue – we are back to the policy initiatives. We on *Today* still think the policy initiatives are important and deserve a public forum, but there are times when we wouldn't – and we should tell the audience when that happens. The spin doctors should look on it as a welcome adoption of the moral high ground; we'll be straight with you, but in return we expect to be able to examine, with rigour, ministers on thorny areas that they may not wish to confront in public. And when they refuse to answer, or appear, we should explain to the audience why.

In the meantime, instead of shedding responsibility and blaming the Press when *Today* programme quotes get taken out of context, I apologise to Robin Cook.

The writer is editor of Radio 4's *'Today'* programme

I won't mention the war, says Cook

By George Jones, Political Editor

ROBIN COOK, the Foreign Secretary, tried to assure German sensitivities yesterday by promising that he would not bark back to the

press. "I can give an undertaking that we won't," said Mr German finance minister, for the harmonisation of taxes.

America had just made the immensely successful film *Saving Private Ryan* about the holocaust.

in a disagreement with colleagues, or party to financial shenanigans. Can you remember a single interview on *Today* – or *Newsnight* or *The World Tonight* – with Geoffrey Robinson, ever?

There is a feeling at those difficult times that they will appear on programmes that are less challenging,

when it is less in the Government's interest for us to talk to ministers, and this is when the shutters come down. Not all Government departments are alike; it would be hard to find a more open minister than Jack Straw, the Home Secretary.

And perhaps that's where we need to be clearer with the politi-

MPs making the most out of Fleet Street

The latest register shows that more politicians are trying their hands at journalism. By Paul Waugh

LAST MONDAY, at the height of the row over Jack Straw's injunction on the Lawrence report, the House of Commons witnessed a strange and surreal spectacle – a leading Tory MP flaunting his membership of a trade union. Sir Norman Fowler, Mr Straw's shadow, yelled across the despatch box a declaration that was as passionate as it was unfashionable: "I have been a member of the National Union of Journalists for the past 35 years."

Though Labour MPs emitted a collective "Oooh!" of mock admiration, it wasn't long before Gerald Kaufman was attempting to outflank Sir Norman with a similar boast of his membership of the NUJ. They may abhor the tactics, impulses and downright doggedness of the Fourth Estate, but the link between politicians and the press is clearly as strong today as it ever was.

Evidence of the increasing symbiosis between Westminster and those dismissed by former Chan-

cellor Nigel Lawson as "teenage scribblers" is revealed in the new Register of Members' Interests.

Down among the minutiae of declarations of gifts are to be found a series of entries from MPs proving that most are glad to take the shilling of Murdoch, the Mirror Group, *Accountancy Age* magazine, and indeed anyone else who will have them.

The majority of MPs simply refer to "occasional income from journalism" without specifying the media outlet they most favour, or the amount received. However, the register shows that some members make a very nice earner out of the tawdry trade.

Joint top of the wages league are the formidable Tory Ann Widdecombe and Labour's "Gorgeous" George Galloway, both of whom have suffered at the hands of the

tabloids. The two MPs each rate in up to £25,000 a year by penning articles for newspapers. Two other high-earners are Frank Field, who gets up to £20,000 a year, and Alex Salmond, who earns around £15,000.

Such sums may appear large, but the all-time record for MP's earnings

from journalism is still held by Lord Hattersley, a regular columnist with *The Guardian*, who in the 1997 register confessed to receiving up to £10,000 a year.

The green benches are littered with those who swapped one form of hackery with another. Michael

Foot entered the Commons on the back of editorships of both the *London Evening Standard* and *Tribune*; Sir Norman Fowler was a

correspondent for *The Daily Telegraph*; and Martin Linton wrote for *The Guardian*.

The pattern is repeated in govern-

ment, with the Trade and Industry Ministers Brian Wilson and Michael Wills, the Welsh Secretary Alun Michael and, last but never least, the Spinebreaker himself, Peter Mandelson, who famously earned his clambatta crusts at LWT alongside John Birt.

The trend until recently has almost always been one way, with Parliament somehow seen as an elevation from the grubby trade, but now an increasing number of MPs have spotted that they can make a decent living as columnists, diarists and even TV presenters should they ever end up on the dole. Matthew Parris, the former Tory MP, has made a highly successful transition to become *The Times' Commons*

sketch writer; while Michael Portillo has made a series of films for Channel Four.

Lord Hattersley stresses that there is a distinction between professional journalists who return to their first love and those MPs who simply try their hand at it occasionally. "I actually regret that there are so few genuine writing MPs because politics and literature ought to go together," he said. "I think if they're good at it, the public don't mind. What the public don't like is politicians ... trading on their fame and little else." Ken Baker's book on Conservative poets was an embarrassment and a flop. But if MPs can earn a bit of money from it, they will. It keeps them off the streets, I suppose."

Maybe the reason for the switch over to journalism as a fall-back career is hidden in the frequent opinion polls that MPs read. They show that journalists are truly loathed by the public, but that they hate politicians the most.

THE TOP EARNERS FROM JOURNALISM

Stuart Bell
(Lab, Middlesbrough)
Regular column for *Mail on Sunday* financial section. Up to £15,000. Regular article for *Accountancy Age*. Up to £5,000.
Patrick Cormack
(Con, South Staffs)
Editor of *House Magazine*. Up to £15,000.
Roseanna Cunningham

(SNP, Perth)
Weekly column for the *Scottish Mirror*. Up to £20,000.
Frank Field
(Lab, Birkenhead)
Regular column for *Sunday People*. Up to £20,000.
George Galloway
(Lab, Glasgow Kelvin)
Regular column, *Mail on Sunday*. Up to £25,000. Weekly column for the *Sunday Express*. Up to £40,000 for six months.

مكذا من الأصل

Michelin honours poetic chef of Auvergne

A SELFTAUGHT chef who finds inspiration - and wild herbs - while running in his native hills in the southern Auvergne won the highest accolade in French cooking yesterday.

Michelin Bras, 52, was given the coveted third Michelin star for his mountain-top, hotel-restaurant near Laguiole, 3,700ft up in the Aveyron hills of south-western France.

His elevation by the 1999 Michelin Guide marks a - possibly deliberate - turning away from the globe-trotting, superstar chefs who have made the gastronomic news in France in recent years. Mr Bras, who learnt cooking mostly from his mother, specialises in elaborate versions of regional dishes and rarely strays from home territory.

Bespattered and given to poetic utterances, Mr Bras is known, to his annoyance, as the "herbologist" of French cooking. His use of wild and unusual plants, such as meadow-sweet, started a

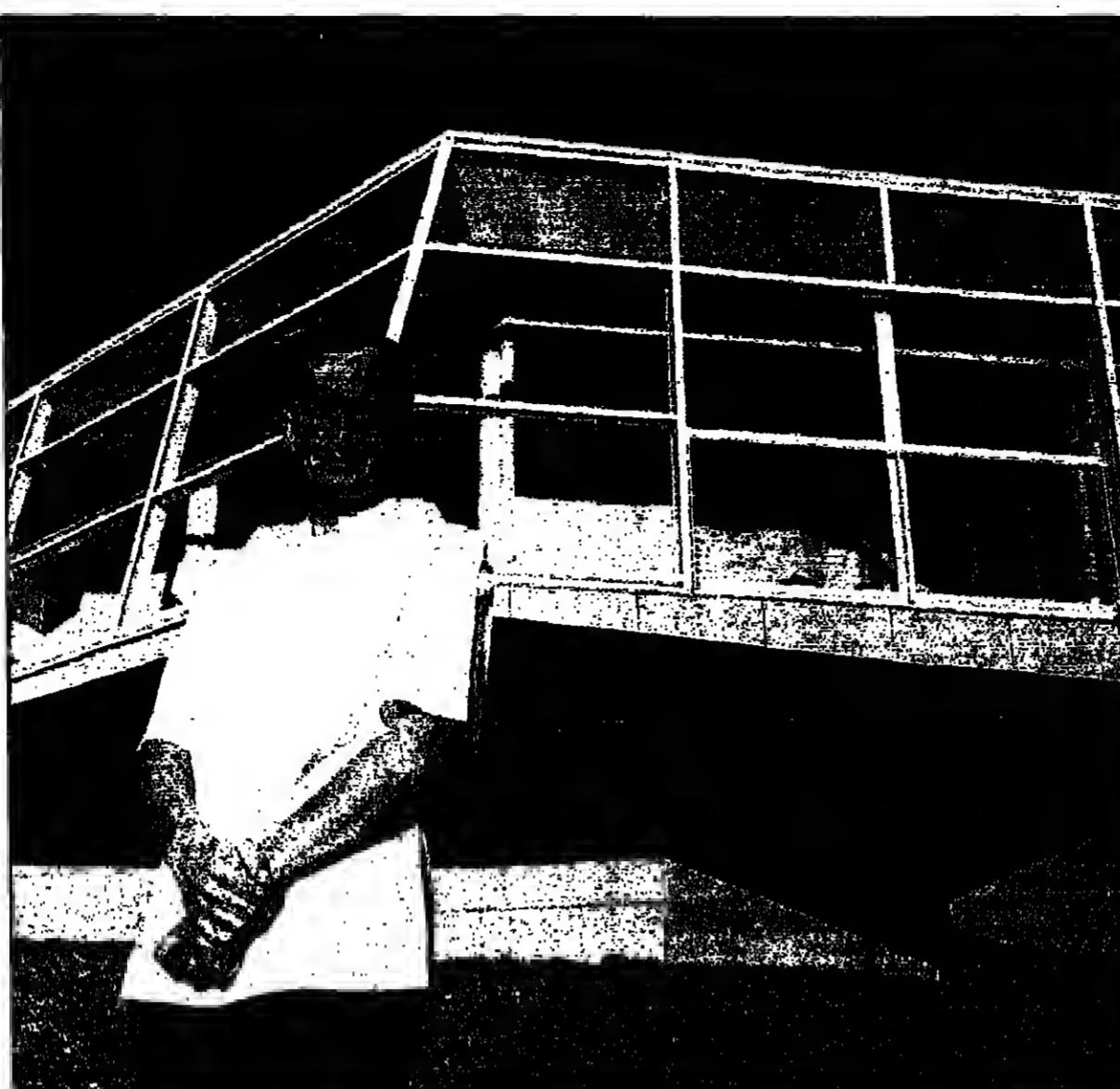
herbal trend among better-known, and more expensive, restaurants in the big cities.

"I run several times a week in the mountains and it is from these runs that I harvest ideas and emotions," he said last week, when news of his probable emblement by Michelin leaked out. "That's how I discovered meadow-sweet. I still clearly remember the circumstances of this encounter - the sky, the light and that leaden scent, heavy with honey."

Mr Bras is best known for two dishes, "Biscuit de chocolat coulant" (Biscuit of melted chocolate) and "Gargouillot de jeunes légumes" (which means, literally, a gurgling of bubbling of young vegetables).

His restaurant maintains the informality of a country inn: customers are invited to clean their knife and fork on a piece of bread between courses.

Prices, although hardly cheap, are reasonable com-



Michelin Bras, whose restaurant near Laguiole, south-western France, has joined the Michelin elite

At last, a good hairdresser

STREET LIFE SAMOTECHNY LANE

SINCE LAST August's economic crash, some Russians have had the faith and courage to launch new businesses. It would be an exaggeration to say the spring of recovery has arrived. Rather, a few ventures are tentatively emerging like snowdrops pushing up from under snow.

Of two in the Samotechny Lane area, one is a new hairdressing salon. Before Alexander opened "Persona Lab", we all used to go to Aunt Lyuda's. She may have been a wizard at dyeing the beehives of the local female trolley-bus drivers. But she always made a mess of my simple bob. Then I would go to some flashy haunt of the New Russians and pay \$100 (250) to have my hair "corrected". Outrage at the price, however, would mean that next time I was back with the trolley-bus drivers, trusting my hair to the cheap and cheerful Lyuda.

Alexander now offers an exit from that vicious circle. Just before Christmas, he opened a salon giving the kind of cuts he learnt while studying in London, at prices that middle-class Russians, at least, can afford. He economised on decor - the walls are white - to concentrate on styling cutting. "Everything was overblown before," he said. "Who could afford those inflated prices?" Now he has a steady stream of clients, able to pay the equivalent of \$30, and is feeling optimistic.

Further down the road is Belinda. It used to be the biggest supermarket in the area and, frankly, was a bad joke. You had to be a masochist to shop there. The prices for the imported groceries were astronomical, yet the service was positively abusive.

When the rouble plunged, a funny thing happened. For two short weeks in September, Belinda, which still had stocks at old prices, became the cheapest shop in the area. Word spread quickly. Poor housewives flocked there to stock up on rice and macaroni

and try, perhaps for the first time, more exotic items such as pâté de foie gras.

When the last goods were sold off, Belinda went out of business. Since then, a lot of renovation has been going on.

Last week, Italian leather sofas went in. Then shelves with cheap mugs, washing powder and shampoo appeared. What was going on?

I walked in. A young assistant called Dima greeted me with a smile. In the back, I met Maria Belova, the equally welcoming manageress. "Down boy," she commanded, the black alsatian at her side. He was not a guard dog, she said, but a stray she had found injured and adopted. The atmosphere in the shop had certainly become friendlier.

What gave Ms Belova, who used to work in a Russian jewellery factory and also lived for a while in London, the confidence to open her own store after other entrepreneurs had been bitten? "We can't just sit and accept that our country is going down the drain. We have to try again."

Ms Belova, smart in a black and white hound-tooth checked suit, said lessons had been learnt from the crisis.

"Businesses should not try to

make too much money too fast. They should deal with reliable partners. And they should be flexible."

She went on to explain how

she was creating a mini-

department store, with a

range of goods from expensive

furniture to the cheapest

household items. "We will

watch and see what is popular. Later we might concentrate on one thing or another."

So far, customers are looking

at the sofas as if they were

museum pieces but they are

snapping up the floral mugs at

60 roubles (22 each). "International Women's Day is coming up on 8 March," said Ms Belova. "For husbands wanting a change from the regulation

three red tulips, the mugs

make nice little presents for

their wives."

HELEN WOMACK

Kosovar villagers flee Yugoslav military

YUGOSLAV SOLDIERS and police appear to be clearing villages in Kosovo along the border with Macedonia of their Albanian inhabitants.

About 5,000 villagers, fearing military attack, have fled their homes in the past few days, seeking refuge across the border with friends and neighbours. Many, however, are camping outdoors within the

BY EMMA DALY
in Gajre

borders of Kosovo. In one gully, women and children waited as their men cut down branches for temporary shelters. The group of 300 had come from the village of Gajre, close to the main road leading south from the province's capital, Pristina, to Macedonia. They

were preparing to spend a second night in the snow. Back in the village, rebel fighters from the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) patrolled the streets, but few civilians remain. Ismet Calaku, who returned yesterday to find the body of his brother - presumably shot dead by Yugoslav forces attacking the village - said: "Where can we go? Do you think we are safe anywhere?"

Further north, near the village of Velika Hoca, international mediators succeeded in preventing a feared attack by the Serb security forces, after the murder of a Serb civilian. KLA members yesterday handed over the body of the Serb, who was taken hostage last week. They released his companion, who had been badly beaten. The exchange was negotiat-

ed by verifiers from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Both Serbs were from Velika Hoca, a Serb enclave on a hill held by the KLA. The two were kidnapped after the seizure last week of three Albanians, two of whom were found dead yesterday. ■ The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, who begins a three-day visit to Russia today, will attempt to persuade Moscow to contribute troops to Kosovo - something seen as a crucial ingredient in securing acceptance by the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, of a foreign peace-keeping force. But Mr Cook will have to overcome Russian hostility to the overall Nato command of the force demanded by alliance members, led by the US.

When the rouble plunged, a funny thing happened. For two short weeks in September, Belinda, which still had stocks at old prices, became the cheapest shop in the area. Word spread quickly. Poor housewives flocked there to stock up on rice and macaroni

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NEW FILMS

LOVED (15)

Director: Erin Dignam
Starring: Robin Wright Penn, William Hurt
Erin Dignam's *Loved* has been collecting dust on distributors' shelves for nearly two years now. Not because it's bad, one imagines, but because it's so subtly unclassifiable, so removed from the stock methods of tackling its volatile subject matter. Robin Wright Penn stars as an abused ex-girlfriend recalled upon by William Hurt's lawyer to testify against her brutal former boyfriend. Yet *Loved* deliberately evades the hectoring quality that fuels so many TV movies. Instead, it paints charged and troubled relationships for what they are: complex, personal and inextricably entwined. West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue

PAINTED ANGELS (15)

Director: Jon Sanders
Starring: Kelly McGillis, Brenda Fricker
The angels are whores; the paint from the gloomier end of the palette. Jon Sanders' revisionist western revolves around a frontier brothel presided over by Brenda Fricker's no-nonsense madam. Earthy, naturalistic acting goes hand in hand with Gerald Packer's evocative visuals, though the downbeat handling makes it slow going at times. West End: ABC Piccadilly, *Renoir*

PERRITA DURANGO (18)

Director: Alex De La Iglesia
Starring: Rosi Pérez, Javier Bardem
Alex De La Iglesia's quasi sequel to David Lynch's *Wild at Heart* is a strutting Tex-Mex caper, tequila-ed to the gills and running on a kind of posturing wackiness. Rosi Pérez accredits herself well as the vixenish heroine who abducts a pair of all-American virgins, while *Lust, Fury*'s Javier Bardem simply glowers from beneath a comedy wig. It's camp, garish and annoyingly entertaining. West End: Clapham Picture House, Metro, Odeon Camden Town, Virgin Haymarket

THE THIN RED LINE (15)

Director: Terence Malick
Starring: Sean Penn, Nick Nolte
See *The Independent Recommends*, right.
West End: Odeon Leicester Square

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

TITANIC TOWN (15)

Director: Roger Michell
Starring: Julie Walters, Nuala O'Neil
All aboard for Troubles-hit Belfast, circa 1972. The IRA and British forces are taking potshots at each other. Civilians are dying in the crossfire. Julie Walters' local mumbos lobby for a ceasefire and is caught between the opposing factions. Michell's fast-paced tale is well-intentioned, but it's faintly lightweight, too. For a film implicitly about rage, waste and human passions, it's low on dramatic oomph. West End: ABC Swiss Centre. Local: Kilburn Tricycle Cinema

URBAN LEGEND (18)

Director: Jamie Blanks
Starring: Jared Leto, Alfre Woodard
As 1978's *Halloween* spawned a crop of shabby wannabes, so Wes Craven's *Scream* is siring its own breed of movie runts. Enter *Urban Legend*, Blanks's stalk-and-slash romp, which clones *Scream's* ticks, twists and in-jokes in much the same way that its campus killer mimics the crimes of popular myth. The result is strangely bland and inconsequential. West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

YOU'VE GOT MAIL (PG)

Director: Nora Ephron
Starring: Tom Hanks, Meg Ryan
Riffing on her earlier, more assured *Sleepless in Seattle*, Ephron ushers seasoned pros Hanks and Ryan through a contrived romantic comedy that's zapped out of its old-fashioned rut by a shrewd Internet plot hook. Hanks and Ryan squabble in daily life and get all gooey on-line, resulting in a brew that is soft, shuggy and just slightly on the turn. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

ANTZ (PG)

Director: Terence Malick
Starring: Sean Penn, Nick Nolte
See *The Independent Recommends*, right.
West End: Odeon Leicester Square

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

The Thin Red Line (15)

Terrence Malick returns to the screen after a 20-year absence with a bug-eyed ambitious film about the battle of Guadalcanal. A war movie of a sort, though what that sort might be is uncertain.

Life is Beautiful (La Vita è Bella) (PG)

Roberto Benigni directs and stars in this tragicomic fable about an Italian Jew who tries to shield his boy from the horrors of a Nazi concentration camp by pretending that it is an elaborate game.

Shakespeare in Love (15)

This enjoyable romp suggests how romance fired Shakespeare with the creative inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*. Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow head a multi-star cast.

A Bug's Life (U)

Less sophisticated and more child-friendly than *Antz*, this animated feature (right) spins an enjoyable yarn about an ant colony and its battle to survive. Kevin Spacey provides the voice of the chief grasshopper.

Affliction (15)

Paul Schrader's bleak study in fatherhood and fatalism, adapted from Russell Banks's novel, stars Nick Nolte as a man struggling to escape the influence of his violent dad (James Coburn).

Copenhagen (Duchess Theatre, London)

Michael Frayn's profound and haunting meditation on science, morality and the mysteries of human motivation (right).

To 7 Aug

Oklahoma! (Lyceum Theatre, London)

Widely regarded as the best ever, Trevor Nunn's glorious production of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic fully deserves its West End transfer. To 26 Jun

The Winter's Tale (RSC, Stratford)

An amazingly rich and complex performance from Antony Sher in Gregory Doran's Romano-style production. In rep to 4 Mar

Hushabye Mountain (Gardner Arts Centre, Brighton)

Dying of AIDS and living with AIDS: Jonathan Harvey's witty, sad and uneven new play looks at the disease in two eras. To 6 Mar

ANTHONY QUINN

PAUL TAYLOR

Monet in the 20th Century (Royal Academy)

He lived until 1926. The gardens and lily ponds at Giverny dissolve into elemental visions: fiery lights, haze, liquid reflections, voids and depths. The strange last works of Impressionism (right). To 18 Apr

Portraits by Ingres (National Gallery)

Some of the most intense portraiture ever. Women: exquisite melanges of flesh and fabric, dreams of sex and money. To 25 Apr

Patrick Caulfield (Hayward Gallery)

The modern-object world made luminous. Caulfield is a virtuoso of many styles, and this retrospective offers the range – notably, those fat, laconic outlines flooded with translucent colour. To 11 Apr

Peter Doig & Udomsak Krisanamis (Fruitmarket, Edinburgh)

Two painters collaborate. Doig's sizzling, curdling, overloaded landscapes mix with Krisanamis's collages of cultural detritus and doodles. To 27 Mar

Aubrey Beardsley (Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool)

Drawings, prints and posters from the short and brilliant career of the 1890s aesthetic and illustrator, with uniquely sinuous, florid line. To 11 Apr

TOM LUBBOCK

FINCHLEY ROAD (WARNER VILLAGE)

(0171-6043059) \oplus Finchley Road A Bug's Life 6pm Shakespeare in Love 2.30pm, 2.35pm, 4.55pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm La Vita è Bella 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 9.15pm You've Got Mail 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm

CROYDON (CROYDON)

(0181-6883422) \oplus West/Croydon A Bug's Life 5.40pm Little Voice 5.45pm, 8.10pm Step-mom 5.30pm, 8.15pm Zakkum 8pm

SAFARI (0181-6883422) \oplus West

West/Croydon A Bug's Life 5.40pm Little Voice 5.45pm, 8.10pm Step-mom 5.30pm, 8.15pm Zakkum 8pm

WARNER VILLAGE (0181-6803090)

BR East/Croydon A Bug's Life 2.30pm, 3.40pm, 4.50pm, 6.10pm, 7.10pm, 8.30pm, 9.30pm

HOLY MAN (0181-6803090)

Holy Man 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm You've Got Mail 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm

GOLDERS GREEN (0181-4551724)

Golders Green You've Got Mail 2.45pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm

GREENWICH CINEMA (0181-2930101)

Greenwich A Bug's Life 4.45pm, 6.45pm Shakespeare in Love 8.40pm This Year's Love 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm You've Got Mail 5.10pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm

HAMPSTEAD (0870-9020413)

Belsize Park A Bug's Life 4pm, 6.20pm Shakespeare in Love 2.35pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm

HAMMERSMITH (0870-7071718)

Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith A Bug's Life 1.30pm, 4.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm

WARNER VILLAGE (0181-29101)

Warner Village 1.30pm, 4.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm

WILLOW (0870-9070718)

Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith A Bug's Life 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm

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Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith A Bug's Life 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm

WILLOW (0870-9070718)

PUTNEY
ABC (0870 9020401) ♦ Putney Bridge 2R: *Putney A Bug's Life* 4pm, Little Voice 1.15pm, 6.30pm, 6.45pm Shakespeare in Love 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm You've Got M@ll 2.1pm, 5.15pm, 8.30pm

RICHMOND
ODEON (08705 050007) BR/♦ Richmond *A Bug's Life* 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm Shakespeare in Love 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm You've Got M@ll 1pm, 3.50pm, 5.30pm, 9.20pm

ODEON STUDIO (08705 050007) BR/♦ Richmond *Don't Go Breaking My Heart* 1.30pm, 7.50pm *Hillary And Jackie* 3.40pm, 9pm *Holy Man* 3.20pm, 6.20pm *Little Voice* 7pm, 9.30pm *Stepmom* 12.50pm, 6.40pm *This Year's Love* 4.10pm, 9.40pm, 9.20pm

ROMFORD
ABC (0870 9020419) BR: *Romford A Bug's Life* 2.10pm, 4.15pm, 6.20pm *Jack Frost* 6pm *Stepmom* 3.25pm *This Year's Love* 2.15pm, 5.30pm You've Got M@ll 2.25pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705 05007) BR/♦ *Liberty A Bug's Life* 1.15pm, 2.30pm, 4.20pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 7pm, 8.40pm *Holy Man* 12.45pm, 3.30pm, 6.45pm, 8.40pm *Little Voice* 9pm Shakespeare in Love 12.20pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm *Stepmom* 1.20pm, 3.20pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm *This Year's Love* 1.10pm, 3.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm

SIDCUP
ABC (0870 5551311) BR: *Sidcup A Bug's Life* 6pm *Shakespeare In Love* 8.20pm You've Got M@ll 5.15pm, 8.15pm

STAPLES CORNER
VIRGIN (08707-9070717) BR: *Cricket* 1.15pm, 3.20pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm *Holy Man* 6.45pm, 9.20pm Shakespeare in Love 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.50pm *This Year's Love* 1.30pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm *Stepmom* 2.20pm, 4.20pm, 6.40pm, 8.40pm You've Got M@ll 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm

STREATHAM
ABC (0870-9020415) BR: *Streatham Hill Hides* *Kinky* 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.50pm, 8.30pm *Shakespeare In Love* 2.25pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm *Stepmom* 2.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm

DDEON STUDIO (08705 050007) BR: *Streatham Hill Brighton/Clapham Common A Bug's Life* 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7pm *Dead Man's Curve* 12.50pm, 2.50pm, 4.50pm, 6.50pm, 8.50pm *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* 6.30pm, 8.45pm *This Year's Love* 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 5.45pm, 7.45pm You've Got M@ll 1pm, 3.45pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm

STRATFORD
NEW STAFFORD PICTURE HOUSE (0181-555 3366) BR/♦ *Stratford East A Bug's Life* 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm *La Vita è Bella* 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm *This Year's Love* 1.30pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm You've Got M@ll 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

SURREY QUAYS
UCI (0999-889990) ♦ *Surrey Quays Antz* 12.50pm *A Bug's Life* 1.20pm, 3.20pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 7.10pm, 8.30pm *Holy Man* 3.30pm, 5.45pm, 7.50pm *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* 5.30pm *The Land Girls* 2.10pm, 5.10pm, 7.40pm, 10.10pm *Madeline* 1.40pm, 4.20pm *The Prince of Egypt* 1.10pm *Shakespeare In Love* 12.40pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9.30pm *Stepmom* 1.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm

SWANSEA
ABC (0870 5551311) BR: *Swansea Antz* 1.20pm *A Bug's Life* 1pm, 3.30pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 7.10pm, 8.30pm *Holy Man* 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 5.45pm, 7.45pm *Stepmom* 1.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm You've Got M@ll 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

SWINDON
ABC (0870 9070717) BR: *Swindon Antz* 1.20pm *A Bug's Life* 1pm, 3.30pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 7.10pm, 8.30pm *Holy Man* 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 5.45pm, 7.45pm *Stepmom* 1.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm You've Got M@ll 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

SYDNEY
ABC (0870 9070717) BR: *Sydney Antz* 1.20pm *A Bug's Life* 1pm, 3.30pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 7.10pm, 8.30pm *Holy Man* 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 5.45pm, 7.45pm *Stepmom* 1.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm You've Got M@ll 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

SYRACUSE
ABC (0870 9070717) BR: *Syracuse Antz* 1.20pm *A Bug's Life* 1pm, 3.30pm, 4.30pm, 6pm, 7.10pm, 8.30pm *Holy Man* 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 5.45pm, 7.45pm *Stepmom* 1.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm You've Got M@ll 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

THEATRE
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ABC (087

TUESDAY RADIO

RADIO 1

(97.6-98.6MHz FM)
6.30 Jo Boal. 9.00 Simon Mayo.
12.00 Jo Whiley. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00 Dave Pearce.
8.00 Steve Lamacq - the Evening Session. 10.00 Digital Update.
10.30 John Peel. 12.00 The Breezeblock. 2.00 Clive Warren.
4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.

RADIO 2

(98.2-99.6MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Ken Bruce.
12.00 Juliet Morris. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Alan Freeman: Their Greatest Hits. 8.00 Nigel Odden. 9.00 To Mother with Love: the Story of the Tattoo. 10.00 The Directors. See Pick of the Day.
10.30 Richard Allison. 12.00 Lynn Parsons. 3.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.

RADIO 3

(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air.
9.00 Masterworks.
10.30 Artist of the Week.
11.00 Sound Stories.
12.00 Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky.
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. A concert given last October at St George's, Brandon Hill, Bristol, by Jean-Yves Thibaudet (piano). Introduced by Chris da Souza. Debussy: Brouillards; Feuilles mortes; La pluie du vin; Les sœurs sont des demoiselles dansantes; Bruyères; Feux d'artifice (Préludes, Book 2). Ravel: Pavane pour une infante défunte; Jeux d'eau; Le tombeau de couperin 2.00 The BBC Orchestras.
4.00 Voices.
4.45 Music Machine.
5.00 In Tune.
7.30 Performance on 3. Live from the Royal Festival Hall, London. Ensemble InterContemporain, Philharmonie/Pierre Boulez. Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony No 1; Webern: Five Pieces for Small Orchestra, Op 10; Schoenberg: Lied der Waldbau (Gurrelied).

8.35 Pierre Boulez. Pierre Boulez is one of the few musical thinkers who have actually had the pleasure of seeing their dreams translated into reality. Here, he talks about the Cite de la Musique, IRCAM, and his vision of the future of musical performance. 8.35 Concert, part 2. Mahler: Rück-

PICK OF THE DAY

THERE ARE echoes of Alan Bennett in the Afternoon Play (2.15pm R4). Char March's monologue "People Come Here To Cry" it deals with Deborah, a middle-aged woman who visits her local crisis centre to receive counselling for an undisclosed problem. The pain is presumably supposed to seep through the determinedly brisk observations but it's the soulful performance

of Sue Johnston's (right) that stops you weeping in disbelief. In The Directors (10pm R2), Nora Ephron, the wisecracking first lady of romantic comedy, talks about her debt to her mother, Phoebe, and her non-macho approach to movie making - a good cappuccino machine for the crew can make all the difference, apparently.

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